



Perschore High School

Quality education
for all in a
challenging,
supportive and
safe environment

Monday 1st March 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. Given the Prime Minister's announcement last week, we are delighted to be able to plan for welcoming students back to school on a staggered basis, starting from next Monday (8th March). The details of their return and the associated Covid-19 testing arrangements are set out below.

Whilst we understand that parents and carers will be keen for their son(s)/daughter(s) to return to school as soon as possible, a lot of thought has been given to our plans to ensure a safe and manageable return for all students and staff. We have prioritised the return of students in exam years and ensured that our testing arrangements work for large cohorts of students, by not overwhelming them with multiple year groups in the first few days. The DfE's 'Schools coronavirus (Covid-19) operation guidance' outlines in detail the procedures and process we must adhere to.

The full list of updates within this week's communication, include:

- Return to school arrangements
- Covid-19 testing arrangements
- Return to school expectations
- Remote learning provision
- SEND Advice and Guidance
- Student & Careers Bulletins
- Professional Development Day – Friday 12th March
- Examination grades – Summer 2021
- National Citizenship Service – Calling all Year 11 and Year 12 students

Students returning to school

Return to school arrangements

Our arrangements take into account guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England. Whilst students will be excited about their impending return, it is important they remain committed to our online learning provision, as they have been; there are still significant learning opportunities online which may form part of future student assessments. Students will return to school as outlined below, with online remote learning continuing for all year groups until they return for face-to-face teaching. Students attending school for their first Lateral Flow Test must not use school transport; they will attend for the test only and should then return home. There is a legal requirement for students/parents to register each test with the NHS – detailed instructions will be provided.

Sixth Form:

Thursday 4 th March:	Visit school for Covid-19 test only. Students must not use school transport, specific appointment times will be emailed to parents No live Teams lessons; work via epraise/OneNote.
Friday 5 th March:	Remote learning - live Teams lessons
Monday 8 th March:	Return to face-to-face teaching in school. Second Covid-19 in school test.
Thursday 11 th March:	Third Covid-19 in school test.
Monday 15 th March:	Home self-testing can begin.



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Year 11:

Friday 5 th March:	Visit school for Covid-19 test only. Students must not use school transport, specific appointment times will be emailed to parents No live Teams lessons; work via epraise/OneNote.
Monday 8 th March:	Return to face-to-face teaching in school.
Tuesday 9 th March:	Second Covid-19 in school test.
Friday 12 th March:	Third Covid-19 in school test.
Tuesday 16 th March:	Home self-testing can begin.

Year 10:

Wednesday 10 th March:	Visit school for Covid-19 test only. Students must not use school transport, specific appointment times will be emailed to parents No live Teams lessons; work via epraise/OneNote
Thursday 11 th March:	Return to face-to-face teaching in school.
Monday 15 th March:	Second Covid-19 in school test.
Thursday 18 th March:	Third Covid-19 in school test.
Monday 22 nd March:	Home self-testing can begin.

Year 9:

Thursday 11 th March:	Visit school for Covid-19 test only. Students must not use school transport, specific appointment times will be emailed to parents No live Teams lessons; work via epraise/OneNote
Friday 12 th March:	Return to face-to-face teaching in school.
Tuesday 16 th March:	Second Covid-19 in school test.
Friday 19 th March:	Third Covid-19 in school test.
Tuesday 23 rd March:	Home self-testing can begin.

Year 8:

Friday 12 th March:	Visit school for Covid-19 test only. Students must not use school transport, specific appointment times will be emailed to parents No live Teams lessons; work via epraise/OneNote
Monday 15 th March:	Return to face-to-face teaching in school.
Wednesday 17 th March:	Second Covid-19 in school test.
Monday 22 nd March:	Third Covid-19 in school test.
Friday 26 th March:	Home self-testing can begin.

Key worker and vulnerable students who have been attending school during lockdown should continue to do so as usual from Monday 8th March joining their year group when they return to school for face to face teaching. They do not need to complete the 'first' Lateral Flow Test as they have been completing their testing regularly whilst in school.

Covid-19 testing arrangements

The government has requested that all secondary school students take coronavirus (Covid-19) rapid flow tests as they return to the classroom provided they/their parents have given consent.

Consent forms [Consent Form Link for students under 16](#)
[Consent Form Link for students over 16](#)

must be completed by Wednesday 3rd March in order to have been processed prior to testing. All students who consent need to be tested three times; each test must be three to five days apart.

The first test for all students will take place during a visit to school solely for that purpose. Given the requirement for students to maintain social distance until the results are confirmed, it is not possible for students to be in school, as normal, for this first test; they must therefore go home following their test to continue with remote learning.

- Time of First Test:** Parents/carers will receive an email at least two days before the date of the first test indicating a time within the students are invited to school for their test. We are aware this may cause some inconvenience and are grateful for the effort you will make in ensuring the testing takes place. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 must not attend the school site.
- Location:** Technology Atrium (access from the Bus Bay pathway)
- Queuing:** Students will queue under the Bus Bay Shelter using the markings to ensure the required social distancing. Students should wait to be called by a member of staff. Students should wear face coverings whilst queuing in preparation for entering the school building. Hand sanitisation will also be required using the sanitisation stations provided.
- Drop off / Parking:** Cars should only enter the site and use the North Car Park, closest to the Station and Astroturf pavilion. No parents/carers must park, or drop off, in the Bus Bay or front of school car park, as they will be in use during the day.
- End of test:** Students should return directly to their waiting parent/carer, or make their own way home. Students and parents must observe social distancing, following Government guidelines. Students will be provided with instructions on how to register their test – this is a legal requirement of the testing programme.

After completing three supervised tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid flow tests to use each week at home; ideally, students should complete these on Mondays and Thursdays. Students cannot test at home if they have not previously tested three times in school under the supervision of trained operatives.

Students within 90 days of a confirmed case of COVID-19 may take part in rapid flow testing but if their result is positive they must self-isolate in the same way that others must. Students who have been vaccinated for any reason should still be tested, as they may be asymptomatic carriers.

Given the testing will take place across 12 school days this is quite a logistical undertaking. Any parents who would be willing to volunteer and train as test operatives and administer the tests for any period of time should email: office@pershore.worcs.sch.uk. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Return to school expectations

When students return to school, as in the autumn term, the same arrangements will be in place to make the school environment Covid-19 secure. Primarily, this involves following the Government's 'Hand sanitisation – Face coverings – Safe distance' guidance. Students will remain in year group bubbles, follow one-way systems in certain areas of the school and have staggered break and lunch times. As in the autumn term, face coverings must be worn inside the school buildings at all times; the Government is currently advising that this includes inside the classroom for students in secondary schools where social distancing cannot be maintained, as a temporary extra measure. Whilst the teacher is, in most situations, socially distanced from the students, students invariably are not able to socially distance from each other.

There are a number of other expectations pertinent to the students' return:

Attendance: The Government have noted: '*School attendance will be mandatory for all pupils, with secondary schools able to phase return over the week of 8th March to allow students to be offered testing on return.*' From the day each year group return to face-to-face teaching, online Teams lessons will end. Students who are self-isolating due to Covid-related reasons will complete work set via epraise/OneNote only.

- Catering:** Pershore Kitchen will be open for students at break and lunchtime. Please make sure that your son/daughter's ParentPay account is topped up in advance of their return.
- Equipment:** Students should be fully equipped for their return, this will be checked by Tutors on their first day back. Basic equipment can be purchased from Pershore Kitchen, when items run out.
- Transport:** The arrangements in place during the autumn term in relation to Covid-safe travel to and from school will still apply; students should sit in designated seats within year group bubbles and must wear face coverings at all times whilst on the bus. Bus passes are required for permission to travel
- Uniform:** *On the school site, full, correct school uniform is required on non-PE days:*
Students are encouraged to wear a base layer that is not visible through the school shirt (long sleeved base layers can only be worn with long sleeved shirts) as rooms will be well ventilated.
Students may only wear a navy blue v-neck school jumper under their blazer; this may be a PHS jumper from one of our uniform suppliers with embroidered badge or non-badged equivalent from another clothes retailer.
General hoodies / sweatshirts are not allowed during the school day; a PHS PE Kit hoodie may not be worn under blazers on non-PE days.
In certain circumstances, staff will give permission for coats to be worn in the classroom; otherwise, coats may only be worn outside the school building at break and lunchtime.
- On PE days, full, correct school PE kit is required:*
Only a PHS Navy/sky sports hoodie may be worn.
Students should wear navy school track suit trousers with a badge or plain navy or black joggers or leggings.
- Work:** Students make sure school work completed during the spring term lockdown is available and ready to bring in to school, if requested by subject teachers.

Remote learning provision

Following the announcement of an imminent return to face-to-face teaching, coupled with the publication last Thursday from Ofqual on awarding grades for examinations this summer, we have decided not to make any major changes to our remote learning provision. Teachers are utilising a range of strategies to reduce the concentration on screen time during live lessons and decrease the amount of homework set as positive steps towards addressing mental and physical health concerns until we all return. Thank you again for the time that went into completing our consultation and for the many suggestions you provided.

Please accept our apologies where teachers have had to cancel some live lessons in the first two weeks of this half term and set work instead. As mentioned in my last communication, we are currently recruiting a number of new staff as a result of September's school expansion. Our interviews always include a wide range of colleagues and students and we have tried to schedule as many as possible at this time to lessen the impact on face-to-face teaching when students return. Thank you to those students currently in school together with those working from home who have helped us with aspects of the interview process. Once again, should you have any feedback prior to our reopening, please use: lockdownfeedback@pershore.worcs.sch.uk

SEND Advice and Guidance

We are looking forward to welcoming our students back but are aware that additional support may be needed to prepare for the return to face-to-face teaching. Over the coming week, we will share a

variety of resources on our [SEND Padlet](#) including social stories and reflection sheets. Where appropriate we will also contact families directly should this be necessary.

Please remember that our Inclusion Team are always available and here to help. If you need any support then please contact Mr Campbell or Miss Patrick.

Looking forward

Student & Careers Bulletins

Issue 4 of the Student Bulletin is designed to help the students prepare for their return to school as well as focusing on the usual themes around mental and physical health. If you get the chance to reinforce its key messages with your son/daughter that would be appreciated. In addition, Mrs Beeton has emailed Careers Bulletins to the Sixth Form (with information on virtual taster experiences in a range of progression routes and professions as part of 'I Wonder Wednesdays') and Year 11 (including an Apprenticeship Guide from Rate My Apprentices and a Parents'/Carers' Booklet on Post-16 and Post-18 Options amongst other information).

Professional Development Day – Friday 12th March

Our scheduled Professional Development Day on Friday 12th March has been postponed and so all students are expected in school – except Year 8 students who will be visiting school for Covid-19 testing only. Although the day will be required in the summer term to provide time for essential curriculum development, it is not appropriate to disrupt our return to face-to-face teaching and testing programme at this time. The rearranged date will be confirmed at the start of the summer term.

Examination grades – Summer 2021

Further information was published on Thursday by the DfE and Ofqual on how grades will be awarded following the cancellation of examinations this summer. The following key principles have been determined:

- Teachers must assess their students' performance, only on what content has been delivered to them by their teachers.
- Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course to inform their judgement. Teachers should determine the grades as late in the academic year as is practicable, and not confined to a defined window, to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible.
- Schools should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content to determine the grades before submitting the grades to the exam boards.
- Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment (NEA), including for Project qualifications. NEA will be marked by teachers and will contribute to the overall grade, whether or not it has been completed, but exam boards are not required to moderate it.
- In GCSE, AS and A level art and design, the student's grade must be based on the portfolio¹ only, whether or not it has been completed.
- In GCSE English language, GCSE modern foreign languages and A level sciences centres should determine and submit a separate grade or result for the endorsement (speaking or practical). This result or grade should be based on work that has been completed towards the endorsement.
- Students will be able to appeal their grade. An exam board will only revise a student's grade at appeal where the board finds the evidence on which the grade was determined cannot reasonably support that grade, rather than as a result of marginal differences of opinion. A student's grade could go up or down following an appeal.
- Results days will be on Tuesday 10th August for AS and A level, and Thursday 12th August for GCSE results; these have been moved from Thursday 19th August and Thursday 26th August respectively.
- Results for relevant Vocational and Technical Qualifications that are linked to progression to further or higher education, including some BTECs, will also be issued to students on or before these dates.

- Students/Parents should not enter into discussion with staff about the awarding of grades as this may be viewed as malpractice by exam boards. Teachers will discuss the evidence required for grading but not the grade awarded with students for this reason.

There is still more information to come and the Exam Boards have committed to providing detailed guidance on every qualification before the end of the spring term. I will write to you again before the end of the spring term with any relevant information. This is an unsettling time for examination students and their parents/carers and please be assured that, as last year, our grading process will be accurate, fair and robust.

National Citizenship Service – Calling all Year 11 and Year 12 students

NCS is a youth programme, designed especially for 16 and 17 year olds, as an experience that will give young people a clearer idea of what they want from their future. Each year a large number of students from Pershore High School take part in the NCS scheme and they have a fabulous time, help others and learn new skills. It is worth finding out more to see whether you can persuade your son/daughter to do the same at: [NCS | YMCA Worcestershire](#)

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your support of our students over the last year and in the months to come. We have been very proud how the students have adapted to their new ways of working and the resilience they have shown. The impact of Covid-19 has presented numerous challenges for us all and we look forward to a gradual return to more familiar routines in the near future. Finally, please remind your son/daughter that they should continue to help prevent the spread of the virus, by adhering to the lockdown guidance and staying at home until restrictions start to ease.

With best wishes,



Phil Hanson
Headteacher