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Headteacher: Lynda Walker MA

26th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Schools Re-opening

We have now received guidance from the DfE on the re-opening of special schools from the 8th March 2021. All students of compulsory school age (11 – 16) will be expected to return to school unless they are clinically extremely vulnerable, have tested positive for COVID or are self-isolating as they are a close contact of someone who has tested positive. Attendance will be mandatory so unfortunately; I am no longer able to authorise absence. We are liaising with school transport to know which routes are able to return to full operation and will keep you informed during next week.

We know that some students may find coming back to school full time difficult and we will be in touch with parents if we feel that a phased transition back to school would be helpful. Equally, if you have your own concerns please contact me, or the relevant key stage leader so we can discuss these.

lynda.walker@oaklodeschool.org

Middle School Leader (Classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) Charlotte Charlesworth:

charlotte.charlesworth@oaklodeschool.org

Upper School and Post-16 Leader (Classes 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6) Esther Pearsall:

esther.pearsall@oaklodeschool.org

We will, at least until March 31st follow the same operating procedures that we have had in place since January. Students will stay in their class bubbles and classrooms for most of the day. Students from different key stages will not be able to mix, except by Zoom. Lunches will be served in classrooms and classes will have set times when they can have a break outside.

Staff will also remain in their class bubbles, so we will not be able to cover teachers or teaching assistants if they are unwell or unable to attend work. This does mean that there may be an occasion when we have to close a class on health and safety grounds if we do not have enough staff in a class bubble for it to be safe for the students - we do hope that this will not happen!

We will continue to follow the Public Health England procedures should anyone (staff or student) have a positive test result or be in close contact with someone who has a positive result they will need to self-isolate for 10 days.

Wearing face masks

Our staff all wear masks or face coverings whilst in communal areas. Some staff choose to wear their masks whilst in class. We know that many of our students would find having to wear a mask all day very difficult and we do not intend to make it compulsory for them to do so.

Vaccinations and Testing

If your child is in our Post 16 Department you can contact your GP and ask for them to be vaccinated. Staff in school have all been offered the vaccine and we will be continuing with the lateral flow testing – although from 8th March this will be done at home rather than in school.

If you think your son/daughter is able to self-administer the test please contact teresa.ellis@oaklodeschool.org or charlotte.charleswoth@oaklodeschool.org

Thank you again for your support and understanding during these times

Lynda Walker
Headteacher