



5 March 2021

Dear students, parents, and carers

It's an exciting time for us with welcoming all students back on Monday. During lockdown our staff have taught excellent online lessons; supported all the students who have been attending Skeleton School; and have run the testing programme effectively, whilst ensuring all the back-office functions of our school continue to work efficiently. We have been impressed with how students have worked diligently at home, taking pride in their work and joining in lessons. However, we strongly believe that returning to school for face to face teaching will greatly benefit our students and we are raring to go!

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COVID-19 testing

We are delighted to report that, by the end of today, 878 students have now had their first lateral flow tests, this represents 99% of the school population and is a far higher proportion than national averages. This excellent response demonstrates that students and parents are fully committed to a safe return of all students to school and is indicative of the great level of support we have from parents and students at JMHS.

All the students who have consented to testing will receive their second and third tests as detailed below:

Monday 8 March: Students in Y11, Y12 and Y13 will have COVID-19 test 2

Tuesday 9 March: Students in Y9 and Y10 will have COVID-19 test 2

Wednesday 10 March: Students in Y7 and Y8 will have COVID-19 test 2

Thursday 11 March: Students in Y11, Y12 and Y13 will have COVID-19 test 3

Friday 12 March: Students in Y9 and Y10 will have COVID-19 test 3

Monday 15 March: Students in Y7 and Y8 will have COVID-19 test 3

We intend to issue home test kits with instructions when students have their third test in school and will write to parents with more details about home testing by Monday 15 March.

All students return to JMHS: Monday 8 March

Arrival at school

Students who come to school by bus should go to their year group zones, where they will be supervised until 8.50am when they will move into their classroom for their first lesson of the day. All students travelling on school transport are required to wear a face covering and to sit with students from their year group.

Students who walk to school are asked to arrive at the times below and then report to their year group zone:

- Year 7: 8.35-8.40am
- Year 8 and Year 9: 8.40-8.45am
- Year 10 and Year 11: 8.45-8.50am
- Sixth Form: 8.35-8.40am

In order to ensure student safety, no parental cars will be permitted to enter the school car park after 8.30am. If parents drop off before 8.30am, students should go directly to their year group zone.

Please note that on the first morning Monday 8 March students should go to their form rooms for tutor time where their form tutors will reissue timetables and the students will have an online assembly about how we will work and how we will keep each other safe.

What to bring to school

In order to keep everyone safe, it is essential that all students come to school with a clean, close-fitting face covering each day. As all doors and windows will be kept open to provide ventilation, we recommend that students wear base layers under their uniform and bring a warm coat every day which they will be allowed to wear over their uniform in lessons if necessary.

To minimise the amount of shared equipment between students we are asking that all students come to school each day with the following equipment:

- **A close-fitting face covering must be worn in all classrooms and indoor communal areas**
- At least two good quality blue or black pens
- At least two sharp pencils
- An eraser
- A 30cm ruler
- A scientific calculator
- A green pen for marking their work
- A glue stick for sticking work into their books
- Exercise books and text books for the day
- A large pencil case to put their equipment in
- On days with PE lessons, students should attend school wearing their PE Uniform
- A large water bottle filled with fresh water

Guidance on wearing masks and face coverings - government advice

The safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of reusable face coverings in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully. Staff, pupils and students may consider bringing a spare face covering to wear in the event that their face covering becomes damp during the day.

Safety measures

The following safety measures are in place and will apply to all students and all staff:

- All members of the school wear face coverings in indoor communal areas and classrooms during lessons
- After the initial three COVID-19 tests in school for students, students and staff will have twice weekly voluntary COVID-19 home tests.
- Arrival and departure are staggered to avoid crowding whilst walking to and from school
- Classroom doors and windows are kept open throughout the day to maximise ventilation
- Desks in classrooms are arranged in rows facing the front of the classroom
- Lessons take place in year group zones and students spend lunch and break in their social zone in order to keep year group bubbles separate

- Practical lessons take place in suitable spaces which are thoroughly cleaned between lessons
- Students and staff sanitise their hands when entering or leaving a classroom

The whole school risk assessment has been updated and as always can be found on the JMHS Website or can be accessed here <https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/about-us/covid-19-risk-assessment/> .

Expectations of students - safety

We are delighted to be welcoming all students back to school on Monday. In order to do so safely it is vital that all students comply with the safety protocols detailed below:

- If your child or a member of your household shows symptoms of COVID-19 you must not send your children to school. A test should be arranged for the person showing any of the following symptoms:
 - **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
 - **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
 - **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Follow this link for advice on the next steps: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

- Students must wear a face covering on school transport, in communal indoor areas and in classrooms
- Students must sanitise their hands when entering a classroom, go straight to their allocated seat, face the front of the classroom at all times and obey any instructions the teacher gives to keep the class safe
- Students should do all they can to maintain social distancing in school, remain within their year group bubble at all times and obey the 'no physical contact rule' at all times.

Expectations of students - learning

We are determined that our teachers will be able to teach consistently excellent lessons and students can learn effectively at all times, and feel that given the length of lockdown that this is absolutely vital. Therefore, we will stress to students that they need to:

- Be conscientious, considerate and co-operative at all times
- Arrive promptly to class, immediately get their books and materials out and be ready to learn from the start of the lesson
- Listen attentively and ask questions when they do not understand
- Put 100% effort into all tasks and take pride in their work
- Help other students focus by working quietly on written tasks
- Do all they can to help their teacher, so that the quality of learning and teaching are excellent

We will go through these expectations with students when they return to school, but we would ask that parents support us by talking to students about how important it will be to be conscientious, considerate and co-operative at all times.

Break and Lunch

As before Christmas, students will be escorted to their outdoor social area for break at 10.55am. They will remain there until 11.15am when they are escorted to lesson three.

We will continue with our staggered lunch in order to keep all year groups separate and to reduce crowding in our two dining rooms. Students will be able to choose to purchase our meal deal for £2.30 consisting of a choice of three hot meals or a sandwich, a desert and a drink. Students are also able to eat their packed lunch in the dining rooms. After they have eaten, students can choose whether to remain in the dining room to talk with their friends or to go to their outside social area. Students in all year groups have the opportunity to play sport on the tennis courts or Astroturf pitch during their lunch break.

Please could we remind parents to top up their ParentPay account before Monday so that students can purchase food in school. The top up machines in school cannot be used due to the need for students to remain in their year group zones. We advise parents not to send students into school with money. We have found that some students use money their parents give them to buy energy drinks on their way to school. The energy drinks have a negative effect on concentration and behaviour at school.

Staggered finish to the school day

In order to prevent crowding when students leave the school site, we will continue to have a staggered finish to the school day with lessons finishing at the times listed below:

Y7: 3.05pm

Y8 and Y9: 3.10pm

Y10: 3.15pm

Y11 and Sixth Form: 3.20pm

Students are escorted by their teacher to the bus bay and then released. Students who walk home should leave immediately, whilst those catching a bus will be supervised in the bus park until their bus arrives.

As in the Autumn Term, no parents will be permitted to drive into the school car park until after 3.30pm.

Homework

Once students return to school we will set homework as follows until the Easter holiday:

- Sixth Form will be set homework following each lesson and may be set longer weekly assignments including exam questions
- Year 11 will be set one piece of homework per subject each week. We are expecting students to spend 40-60 minutes on each piece
- Years 9 and Year 10 will be set one piece of homework per subject each week. We are expecting students to spend 30-45 minutes on each piece
- Years 7 and Year 8 will be set one piece of homework in English, maths, science and languages only each week. We are expecting students to spend 30-40 minutes on each piece

Our intention is to get students back into the habit of completing homework without setting excessive amounts.

Communications with parents and visitors to school

In order to keep our school and the wider community safe, we will continue to minimise the number of visitors to JMHS and encourage parental meetings to be via phone or Microsoft Teams. Please do not come onto school site unless you have an appointment booked. If you do have an appointment, please ensure you wear a face covering at all times and remain two metres distant from students and staff.

Extra-curricular activities and after school clubs

After school lessons including those in science and languages will continue to take place as scheduled on the school timetable. Homework club will continue within year group hubs. We will start to offer after school outdoor sports clubs within year group bubbles once we return to school. Miss Newnes, our enrichment coordinator, will write to parents with further details about extra-curricular activities in the near future.

Curriculum Plans for the Spring Term

The topics we are covering this term and the key learning points are summarised on the JMHS website in the Curriculum section, they can be viewed here:

<https://www.jmhs.hereford.sch.uk/curriculum/spring-2021-curriculum/>

Please note that the topics covered may change for some subjects.

Grades for Year 11 and Year 13

The government has confirmed that in summer 2021, students taking GCSE, AS and A levels regulated by Ofqual, should be awarded grades based on an assessment by their teachers. The DFE have stated that:

Teachers can use a range of evidence to make a judgement of the grade they are performing at. Students should only be assessed on what they have been taught, ensuring sufficient coverage of the curriculum to enable progression. When determining the grade, teachers should reflect the standard at which the student is performing now, not their potential.

Teachers should use the time remaining to balance continued teaching with any assessments they want to undertake. Work done at home can be included as evidence to support a teacher's judgement if it cannot be produced in the school or college environment because of the pandemic, and where teachers are confident that it is a student's own work.

We recommend the following range of evidence is used, where available:

- *student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the exam board, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers. This will be supplied by exam boards in late March*
- *non-exam assessment (NEA) work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed*
- *student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as exam board materials and have been marked in a way that reflects exam board mark schemes - this can include:*
 - *substantial class or homework (including those that took place during remote learning)*
 - *internal tests taken by pupils*
 - *mock exams taken over the course of study*
 - *records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE*
 - *records of each student's progress and performance over the course of study*

At JMHS each GCSE, Advanced Level and vocational subject is planning on how they will assess students. They are determining which tests, coursework, practice exams, homework and other tasks already taken by students can be included in their assessment. They are also planning further assessment opportunities between now and May Half Term in order to be able to make a fair and balanced judgement on Teacher Assessed Grades for each student.

- **We will publish a summary of how students are being assessed for each subject on a new area of our website before the end of March or earlier if we are able to so, so that every student and parent can check how they are being assessed for their subjects**
- **We are required to submit final grades to exam boards by June 18. In order to meet this deadline and to give time for teachers to mark assessments and moderate grades, Year 11 and Year 13 students will not be required in school after the May Half Term holiday**
- **Students will receive their results for A/AS levels on the 10 August and GCSEs on the 12 August. We anticipate that relevant vocational results will be issued at a similar time**
- **Next week, Mr Hammond will write to Year 11 students and Mr Hawksworth will write to Year 13 students with further details about how we will assess students and give advice for students on how they can maximise their chances of success**

Events and key dates for the Spring Term

- Monday 8 March 2021: All students return to JMHS
- Monday 8 March – Monday 15 March 2021: Students will have COVID-19 test 2 and test 3
- Thursday 11 March 2020: Year 11 Parents' Evening – Virtual
- Thursday 1 April 2020: Term ends at 3.15pm

... And finally

We have just four weeks left before the Easter holiday, a short period of in school learning. All of us at JMHS are determined that these four weeks are excellent learning experience for all our students. We are feeling a little nervous, but extremely excited about all students returning and looking forward to welcoming you back to JMHS for four great weeks, where we will all support each other in staying safe and learning together.

With my very best wishes



Andrew Evans
Headteacher