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Headteacher: Mrs Emma Anderson
Chair of Governors: Mr Steve Chew

Our ref: CJ/SD/RCY

5 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope this letter finds you well at a time where we are extremely excited about welcoming our students back to school on Wednesday 10 March 2021 to do what we entered the profession to do; to foster a curiosity and thirst for knowledge across our curriculum and provide our students with opportunity and choice. Rightly so you will be worried about the time your child has missed due to the pandemic. Please rest assured that our student's well-being and education are at the centre of all our plans for re-opening and the on-going provision we provide on a daily basis. There will be no talk of catch-up or extra hours as this will place undue stress and anxiety around what the future holds for our students.

We will think carefully about how to teach the powerful knowledge students need and plan the future provision to support their well-being and career aspirations. A raft of extra hours on the school day and summer schools would not necessarily equate to better quality teaching and learning for our students. The arts, the joy of sport, extra-curricular activities, caring relationships, and twenty-five hours of rich knowledge-based lessons to name but a few key features will be at the heart of our plan moving forward. Mr Jenkinson is certainly looking forward to a summer of cricket with students after school.

This is the second of our two planned letters this week and will outline our full re-opening plans in detail. We hope the staggered nature of our letters has helped our communication at a time when it could be quite easy to be overwhelmed with the amount of detail we are trying to share with you. A letter will follow next week which will outline the processes for home testing.

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Operational Details

All students are expected back in school on **Wednesday 10 March 2021** at their normal arrival time. Buses are running as normal but students are also encouraged to walk or cycle to school which benefits their health and fitness, supports the school in its fight to combat climate change as well as supporting the national effort to tackle Covid-19.

Our existing safety control measures relating to face coverings in communal areas, washing hands, hand sanitizer routines, year group bubbles, the one way system, staggered breaks and lunches, ventilation, wearing PE kit on PE days, social distancing from staff and classroom layouts will remain in place. One change to these existing safety control measures is that we are strongly advising the use of face coverings, unless exempt, in classrooms and in the canteen whilst not eating. This will be reviewed at the end of Half Term 4 in line with Government guidance. Face coverings should be plain with no text but can have patterns.

We expect our students to have impeccable standards and be ambassadors for the school at all times. Our standards of uniform are key to this and the school uniform is as follows;

- Burgundy blazer and black polo shirt both with school logo
- Optional black knitted pullover or cardigan with or without school logo – can be worn under the blazer if required for extra warmth
- Black Tailored Trousers or Black Skirt
- Trousers must be tailored, straight legged and full length;
- Trousers should not be tight fitting or a skinny style;
- Trousers should not be jeans, jeggings, leggings, chinos, leather or tracksuit bottoms
- Skirts should finish at or below the knee. Lycra or tight-fitting skirts are not permitted
- Tights or socks if worn should be plain, flesh-coloured or black
- Plain black leather shoes

We also appreciate your support in ensuring no student has false nails as this does not support the positive progress a student can make in lessons with regard to the pace of their writing. Excessive jewellery is not suitable for school and can be dangerous. Accessories that may be worn are one pair of ear studs, one small, discreet nose stud, one flat ring and a discreet necklace. No other body piercings, including facial studs (eg. lips, tongue, and eyebrow) or jewellery, including bracelets of any type (except watches) are permitted. The school reserves the right to ask students to remove any accessories which are deemed inappropriate. Fashion accessories e.g. hats, caps, scarves, ornamental hairbands, ornamental belts and other 'non-school' knitwear are not permitted.

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Equipment is vital in supporting a child's learning and underpins the CDM. The following list below outlines the compulsory equipment a child needs;

- Pencil case
- Two black pens
- One purple pen (this will be provided by the school)
- Pencil
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Whiteboard, Whiteboard Pen and Whiteboard Rubber
- Calculator (this can be purchased through the school)
- Reading book (this can be borrowed from the school library)

On Wednesday 10 March 2021 if students do not have the right equipment we will be supporting students by providing them with essential equipment as necessary to support their return to learning.

Teaching and Learning

It has been a fantastic effort by our students over the last few weeks with remote learning; we have been humbled by the efforts of parents, pupils and our staff. Thank you for your support. To support testing and re-opening there will be no live lessons during Monday and Tuesday with remote learning set for those days in the usual way on Show My Homework. Teacher support will also be more limited as they prepare to welcome all pupils back on Wednesday 10 March 2021. To make sure pupils are ready for lessons can you make sure they bring all of their current booklets for their subjects. The timetable is the same as it was during the Autumn term so please check their Student Planner so they can be organised for the first day back with all of their equipment and the books they need.

The first session students spend in school on Wednesday 10 March 2021 will be an extended Tutor Time spent welcoming students back to school. This session will focus on mental health, school routines and assuring students that we will provide the support they need to flourish. We also know there will be much anxiety with Year 11 and what the next few weeks will look like. Rest assured that we will support all pupils to help them progress to the next phase of their education. As we have said all along, pupils should return and fully focus on their lessons and learning. We will be writing to parents of Year 11 with our plans shortly along with details of a Year 11 Parents Evening on Thursday 25 March 2021.

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Covid-19 Information

The National Lockdown and the testing before our return to school on Wednesday 10 March 2021 will support our aim to keep health and safety as a priority in order to mitigate the risk of infection. We will continue to use our in-school systems and processes if a positive case is confirmed to ensure we are keeping our school community as safe as possible. The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **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

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

If your child has any of these symptoms they must not come to school and you must get a test as soon as possible.

If the test is negative, your child may return to school but if the test is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days since the onset of symptoms. Members of the household must also self-isolate for 10 days. Please be aware that if an individual has had Covid-19 within the last 90 days there is no need for a test.

Attendance

When we return to school on Wednesday 10 March 2021 the Government has outlined that attendance is mandatory. We value attendance very highly as there is a direct link between attendance and academic achievement. As per previous years, we are working towards keeping attendance as high as possible, with our whole school target of 97%. To put this into context, we are at school each academic year for 190 days or 380 sessions and 97% works out as 369 attended sessions. So, to drop below this 97% target, only means having 11 sessions off, or 5½ days over the course of a year.

Please make every effort to book holidays in the periods when we are not at school. As parents, we understand the cost aspects and logistical nightmares. Please also understand that attendance at school is vital to your child's education and future – during a student's time at Newfield School if their attendance is 90% they will miss 20 weeks which equates to 100 days of their education! This could severely affect the possible future opportunities that a student may have.

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Testing Consent Data Collection

Our offer of testing for students is now up and running and at the time of writing this letter we have had zero positive cases despite completing over 700 tests. These tests are significantly enhancing the safety of everyone in our community. Please be aware that the deadline to consent for testing is Monday 8 March 2021 at 8am.

School Communication

At Newfield School we value the importance of communication. We use Edulink One to share key information, messages and letters with our school community. If you have not already done so please download the Edulink One App to your smart phone, tablet or other devices. Moving forward we will be using push notifications through the app and emails.

Free School Meals

Due to the week commencing 8 March 2021 involving a staggered return for our students we will be offering a Free School Meal Voucher. Families that claim Free School Meals are eligible for a food voucher to help support any time spent at home on Monday 8 March and Tuesday 9 March during the staggered return to school. If you need any assistance with these vouchers please contact freeschoolmeals@merciatrust.co.uk.

Please be assured that we are desperate to welcome children back. We have huge confidence in our health and safety measures required for a safe environment. **We will continue** our 'Allied Effort' to follow the guidance protect the NHS and ultimately save lives. We finish this letter by again saying how excited we are that our students will be back in school from Wednesday 10 March and at a time of great uncertainty, the certainty we will give you is that we will continue to give our students our all.

Yours faithfully



Mr C Jenkinson
Co-Headteacher



Mr Dawson
Co-Headteacher