

26 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **School Reopening – Week Commencing Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March**

As a school, we are very aware of the difficulties faced by our students and their families during lockdown and of the concerns you may all have with regards to a return to school.

As we see an improving national, regional and local picture in the current period of lockdown, we feel it is vital to update you on our plans for the wider return of students to school as quickly as possible and to assure you that the school will offer all the support and information you may require.

As you will already be aware, it has been announced that students will return to school **from** March 8<sup>th</sup>. However, the return to school is considerably more complex on this occasion due to the need for schools to test all consenting students initially before their return to school and then on two further occasions before home testing commences.

The testing of students is one of the measures put into place to keep the school as safe an environment as possible for all students and staff. We are proud of the testing facilities that we have set up at the school and students who have participated so far have felt supported in completing the tests.

Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged. For students to participate in the testing programme we **must** have received a completed consent form. We have already sent you an email and link relating to this. In case anyone can't find the original letter, I have also attached it along with this letter. If you wish your child to participate in the testing programme we do need to receive your consent form as soon as possible and **at the latest by Wednesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>**. You will appreciate that this information is extremely important to support a considerable amount of planning.

Due to the requirement for us to conduct testing on return, the number of students that are likely to require testing and the need to safely manage any positive test results, we will need to carefully phase the return of students back into school. We will be prioritising the return of our examination classes, alongside our existing cohort of

**Steve Campbell** Principal

**Hugh Robinson** CEO

Dudley Lane, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE13 6EJ

T +44 (0)191 236 1700

E [admin@northgosforth.co.uk](mailto:admin@northgosforth.co.uk) W [www.northgosforthacademy.org.uk](http://www.northgosforthacademy.org.uk)

vulnerable and key worker children, who will remain in school during the phased return of all students.

**The programme for the wider return to school will be as follows:**

**Year 11** – only students with consent for testing come in on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March for testing only.

11JD 09:30AM

11HJ 09:45AM

11GS 10:00AM

11NJ 10:15AM

Students return home after testing.

Lessons for all Year 11 students commence on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March with a normal school day.

**Year 10** – only students with consent for testing come in on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March for testing only. Reg. group time slots will be sent out to parents next week. Students return home after testing.

Lessons for all Year 10 students commence on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March with a normal school day.

**Year 7** – only students with consent for testing come in on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March for testing only. Reg. group time slots will be sent out to parents next week. Students return home after testing.

Lessons for all Year 7 students commence on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March with a normal school day.

**Year 9** – only students with consent for testing come in on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March for testing only. Reg. group time slots will be sent out to parents next week. Students return home after testing.

Lessons for all Year 9 students commence on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March with a normal school day.

**Year 8** – only students with consent for testing come in on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March for testing only. Reg. group time slots will be sent out to parents next week. Students return home after testing.

Lessons for all Year 8 students commence on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March with a normal school day.

We will be aiming to give students that have consented to testing 2 further tests between 3 and 5 days apart, or as soon as practically possible, after their first test. We will inform students directly in school when their allocated second and third test slots are.

Our remote learning programme will continue for students until they return to lessons in school, and also for students that may need to self-isolate as a result of a positive test or being a close contact of a positive case. We have a dedicated *Remote Learning* page on our school website for our remote learning provision. Please continue to check this page regularly for the latest information and updates.

## **Use of Face Coverings**

We will be updating our Covid-19 protocols and information on the use of face coverings in school on the school website to reflect the updated guidance from the DfE. Please note that face coverings must be worn by all students (unless exempt) at all times in the building, including in the classroom. Face coverings will need to be removed when seated and eating in their dining venue during break and lunch. Any exemptions will be handled in the usual manner by the Pastoral team.

Can you please ensure that your child has a clean mask with them each day. As a school we have supplied 1000's of masks to students since the beginning of the pandemic and this is not financially (or environmentally) sustainable.

## **Year 11 Results 2021**

Ofqual released a document on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February, outlining the process for awarding results for Year 11 students for this summer. It has confirmed that there will be no formally assessed papers set by exam boards and that teachers can award grades based on a combination of mock examinations and other standardised assessed work. They will provide support materials based on past examination papers for schools to use at their discretion.

The guidance outlined that exam boards will put in place arrangements for external quality assurance to check each centre's internal quality assurance process and, in a sample of centres, to review the evidence for one or more subjects. It has confirmed that there will be no dreaded algorithm used to adjust the results of some students. Last year, the process across the Gosforth Group of schools was robust and fair and I am sure the same will happen again. I would like to point out that students will be given plenty of advance warning before any future mocks take place. They will not be completing them in the first week when they return to school. We will send out a more detailed letter to Year 11 parents individually when more information becomes available.

## **School Uniform**

Students should wear their normal school uniform for school. On days when students have PE, they may come to school in their PE kit and wear this throughout the day. We understand that pupils will have grown over lockdown and may struggle to fit into their uniform. Please contact your child's Head of Year if there are issues regarding your child's uniform. The Head of Year will work closely with parents/carers to resolve any issues with uniform as swiftly as possible.

## **The weeks ahead**

We are all looking forward to a carefully managed return to normality over the coming weeks. The staff are keen to welcome our students back into school so that they can, once again, get the benefit of not only the learning experience but the social aspect of school that we know so many of our young people are currently missing out on and value so much.

Many thanks for the ongoing kind messages of support for the staff, which are always greatly appreciated. Please rest assured that we want to manage the return to school as safely as possible and minimise the risks to staff and students along the way. As a result of this, the return to school is carefully phased over a period of time. We feel that it is important to manage this process carefully and safely, with the best interests of everyone in our school community at the centre of our approach.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Campbell', written in a cursive style.

Steve Campbell  
Principal