**REF: March 8th Re-opening**

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are delighted to be able to share with you the plans we have been working on to welcome our students back to school from March 8th following the Government’s recent announcement.

I am grateful to you all for how you have supported us and your children as we have moved from the classroom to online learning this term – it is a huge relief to us all, I am sure you will agree, to know that we can now return to school.

Of course, we will try to make this as straightforward as we can and, as always, we will need your support in helping us to carry these out and to keep everybody safe and at school. This letter will set out our plans in the following areas:

* Onsite testing
* Attendance
* Daily routines
* Teaching and Learning
* Catch up plans
* Pupils Well-Being

**Onsite testing**

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| Monday 8th | 11F and 11M ARRIVE at 9.00am |
|  | 11T and 11V ARRIVE at 11am |
| Tuesday 9th | 10F and 10M ARRIVE at 9.00am |
|  | 10T and 10V ARRIVE at 11am |
| Wednesday 10th | 7F and 7M ARRIVE at 9.00am |
|  | 7T and 7V ARRIVE at 11am |
| Thursday 11th | 8F and 8M ARRIVE at 9.00am |
|  | 8T and 8V ARRIVE at 11am |
| Friday 12th | 9F and 9M ARRIVE at 9.00am |
|  | 9T and 9V ARRIVE at 11am |

**(It is important to note that we will continue to offer places for Key Worker children It is however critical that you complete the form to book the place as there will be limited spaces due to staffing requirements as students return)**

On their allocated day and time, students will come into school in full uniform (except if they have PE) by the main entrance and go straight to the hall with their tutor group where they will wait until called for testing. This is a very simple process and we have trained staff to support the students with this self-testing. As the overwhelming majority of you have given consent for us to carry this out, it will take time but having done it now with those still in school, it is simple and gets quicker the more it is done.

We are expected to carry out a test on all who have given their consent BEFORE they can go to lessons. The results take 30 minutes to process and myself or Mrs Hodge will share the outcome confidentially and on a one to one basis.

Any pupil who does not attend their designated testing slot will not be able to begin face to face teaching, hence it is very important that students attend on the correct day and are on time.

In the event there is a positive test, we will make parents aware immediately and follow the guidance from Public Health England which states that a PCR test should then be taken and until the result is back with you, the student should self-isolate – we will, of course, provide work for this period and if the student is well enough to do it.

All students have to be tested 3 times before they can then carry out their own test at home – school will provide the tests and parents should supervise the test for those aged 12 or over and assist those aged 11. This will start from the 29th March and we will advise separately about what you have to do to report outcomes.

All pupils, once clear will then have activities such as assemblies on well-being and return to lessons.

**Attendance**

As stated in recent government announcements, school attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8 March.

The usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

* parents’ duty to secure their child’s regular attendance at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)
* the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities’ codes of conduct.

We have put a great deal of effort this year in to improving attendance at St Joseph’s and appreciate all the support and communication from parents with this. We look forward to welcoming back all students over the week beginning March 8th and in the coming week we will be working hard to identify and communicate with those students and families who we know have concerns regarding returning to school to offer as much help and support as we can. As a school we are committed to doing all that we can in supporting and rewarding student attendance and we will consider the issuing of fixed penalty notices to be an absolute last resort.

The advice for pupils who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally. The school are required to request from parents a copy of the shielding letter sent to CEV children, to confirm that they are advised not to attend school or other educational settings whilst shielding guidance is in place.

If you aware of a reason why your child cannot return on March 8th, please do contact us on attendance@sjcs.org.uk.

**Daily Routines**

Lessons will return to being face to face sessions as normal with one significant difference – the DfE guidance has made clear that in secondary schools where a 2-metre distance cannot be maintained in the classroom. The wearing of face-masks the government has said is therefore expected. We had a list compiled of students who for medical or other exceptional circumstances were exempt. If you think that you may be exempt, please would you contact Mr Bazen via the covid@sjcs.org.uk email and he or a senior colleague will contact you to confirm arrangements. Students will have to wear a lanyard at all times where this permission has been granted. We hope this will make clear to the school community that there are legitimate reasons and act as a means to show we are doing all we can within the reasonable adjustments to keep the whole site safe.

May I also take the opportunity here to remind you to ensure your child has credit on their cards to purchase lunches. Purchasable food, at present will continue to be take away style.

**Teaching and Learning**

I also wanted to reassure you about the content of lessons when the pupils fully return. We are having what we have called ‘Consolidation Weeks’. This is for staff and students to share and understand what needs reinforcing with regards to their learning in the lockdowns. This will reduce anxiety and enable staff to tailor work accordingly. We must now focus on moving forward together and supporting our students.

Our approach will be as follows:

1. MAP (where the students learning is)
2. MASTER (use the MAP to identify what and where in the curriculum needs mastering)
3. MOVE FORWARD (new content, next sequence of learning)

**Catch-Up Plans**

Regarding GCSE grading arrangements, as soon as we are able we will share these plans. We have not yet received the plans from the Government and any additional Local Authority guidance but as soon as we have, we will be discussing as a senior staff the best method for us and our Year 11s.

You will have seen on the news and in the Media about Catch-Up sessions in the Summer holidays. We will advise you accordingly when we have received the necessary details.

**Pupils Well-Being**

St Joseph’s has always prided itself on the Pastoral Care we provide for all. We describe it as one of our unique qualities. The staff and my Senior Leadership Team have given the return of our students and their Well-Being a huge amount of thought and attention.

To ensure that we continue this outstanding provision, many of you will be aware that we have expanded the Pastoral Team. We have recently attended various on-line training to ensure we meet the needs of those who will find the return to school more challenging. Mr Bazen and his team have demonstrated an exceptional level of planning to welcome your children back.

On Friday 5th March, we are planning another Well-Being day for all pupils. The specific details about this will be communicated to you later this week. Students are excited about returning to school and we are all excited about having them back! The school has felt very quiet and we want all of our young people to feel welcomed back with open arms. Please rest assured that we will nurture those students who need more support and we will work with you as families to ensure we achieve that.

If you have any further questions or need any clarification, please email covid@sjcs.org.uk. Senior members of staff and myself will endeavour to answer as quickly as possible.

Finally, please be reassured that all our plans have been carefully considered to ensure we can do all we can to keep school safe and open. Your help to remind your children to follow the simple hygiene rules, distancing and mask-wearing has shown already that together we can achieve this.

God Bless

Yours sincerely,



Mrs R Ridley

Headteacher