



5th March 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

I last wrote to you as we started our lockdown in January and I am now writing again as we look forward to welcoming all of the children back to our schools from 8th March.

Since a peak in January, levels of coronavirus infection have declined both nationally and locally, leading to the decision that pupils can return to school. We are working in close collaboration with the local authority and public health who continue to monitor infection rates in schools and the wider community on a daily basis so that immediate action can be taken to manage outbreaks and stop the spread of the virus. The overwhelming majority of children and young people have no symptoms, or very mild illness only, if they are infected with Covid-19. Returning to school or college is vital for their educational progress, for their wellbeing and for their wider development, but it is important that we all continue to operate within the government lock down restrictions.

For secondary pupils it is important to participate in the coronavirus testing in order to keep everyone safe. Once the initial testing is complete, all pupils with negative results should return to school. In addition to coronavirus testing in school, all members of households, childcare bubbles and support bubbles of primary and secondary school staff and pupils are eligible for rapid coronavirus tests in the community, even if nobody in the household has symptoms. Your school will provide the details.

All secondary pupils will be asked to wear face-coverings (unless exempt) to reduce the spread of the virus. Primary age pupils are not being routinely tested nor will be required to wear face coverings in school or on transport. To continue to manage the risks of contagion, nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges will continue to implement the range of protective measures which were in place throughout the autumn term. In addition, all staff in schools are now tested twice weekly.

All of our schools will manage their own approach to delivering education, reflecting the local context and circumstances including staff absence. We work closely with the authorities, regularly reviewing arrangements and updating the risk assessments in order to keep risks as low as practically possible.

Your child's school or setting will advise you about any changes to routines, including for dropping pupils off and collecting them at the end of the day, whether this is in person or using transport. If individual schools need to operate phased returns, or to alter timetables temporarily, the details of this and the reasons for it will be made clear in advance.

To keep staff and children safe, we ask that you continue to follow the national lockdown rules. Specifically, we ask the following –

1. Limit visits to schools sites – we request that only one parent bring your child and arrive at school on time and leave the site promptly. Please follow the advice given by schools on collecting your children, including the wearing of a face covering.
2. Please return home promptly – play-dates and outdoor play or meeting in groups remains prohibited under the current government restrictions.



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3. Ensure you follow preventative measures at home including handwashing as soon as you enter your home.
4. Ensure your child/children follow the rules if accessing school transport, including wearing face covering if they are secondary age and above. The safety of our children, parents and school staff is, and always will be, our number one priority.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you the parents and your children for the support and understanding you are showing at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Goulding".

Andrew Goulding

Chief Executive Officer



Hinchingbrooke School
Brampton Road
Huntingdon
Cambs PE29 3BN
ceo@acesacademiestrust.co.uk
Tel: 01480 375675