The Mendip School

The Partnership Trust

Edmund Rack Road, Prestleigh, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 4FZ | T: 01749 838040 E: office@themendipschool.com
www.themendipschool.com

3rd March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are really looking forward to welcoming all pupils back from Monday 8th March. We understand this is a difficult time and some of you may be worried about sending your child/ young person back in to school. Please rest assured that our priority for the week ahead is to settle pupils back into school and remind them of the things they have missed while they have been at home. There will be lots of opportunities to be social with their peer group, play and very few demands.

We also wanted to take this opportunity to reassure you of the measures we still have in place.

- Good respiratory hygiene measures 'catch it kill it bin it'
- Regular handwashing
- The school is split into zones so pupils and staff have reduced contact with people throughout the day
- Enhanced cleaning programme
- Increased ventilation in classrooms
- Social distancing where possible
- Twice weekly lateral flow testing will be in place for staff and students (secondary and above)
- Masks worn by secondary staff and students in communal areas and, for a limited time, classrooms where appropriate

If your child has been deemed clinically extremely vulnerable, has received a shielding letter and is therefore unable to return to school, please let us know. If you have any concerns about your child coming back into school on Monday, please speak to your child's class tutor as soon as possible.

Home Learning

If your child is isolating as they have tested positive or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive, we will provide home learning in a similar manner to before the Christmas holidays. Home learning for all other pupils will no longer be available from the Monday 8th March.

Asymptomatic Testing – YEAR 7 – 14 PUPILS ONLY

Secondary and Post 16 students will have access to regular Lateral flow testing. All pupils will be offered **3 tests on-site** on their return to school, each test will be 3-5 days apart. Pupils must administer the tests themselves at school, staff can support, encourage and guide the pupils. The first day back for pupils will be tricky and, to support a positive return to school, we have decided that the first lateral flow test for returning pupils will be on Tuesday 9th March. Please let us know if you would rather your child not attend school until they have been able to access the lateral flow test.

If your young person is returning to school and you or they would like to consent to them receiving 3 onsite tests, please complete the form using this link.

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https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=RttM1Br5YU2b5hQNENawE_iAvF0rAWBNiZD6Wtv5rXNUNkkxN1JLOEFUN1VSVUlESDBFQkNDNzlMTC4u

After this, they will be given home testing kits so they can be completed twice a week at home. More information and support about this will follow early next week.

Masks

Staff across the school will continue to wear masks in communal areas and for a limited time we will be asking staff and students in Secondary and Post 16 to wear them in the classrooms, where this is appropriate.
In some cases, there will be times that it is not practical for our students or staff to wear masks in lessons, for example when teaching students who need to be able to read facial cues or if a mask would inhibit the health and safety of those in the classroom.
Tutors and teachers will use their knowledge of individual pupils and their best judgement to support pupils accessing the highest quality learning while also mitigating risks in line with the new Government Guidance.

We really look forward to having all of the children back in school. If you have any questions regarding your child's return please contact their class tutor.

Further Information to Follow

Further information will be coming out about

- home testing for pupils
- access to home tests for households of primary and secondary aged pupils

Many thanks

Natalie Hanna

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