



**Rye College**  
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[www.ryecollege.co.uk](http://www.ryecollege.co.uk)

Executive Headteacher: Mr Barry Blakelock  
Head of College: Mr Dom Downes

Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear families,

### Reopening from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

I am writing with information on the re-opening of school to all students from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March. As you may know, UK Government has asked all schools to offer students **three lateral flow tests over their first two weeks** as an important additional control measure against coronavirus. We continue to implement other protective controls as outlined in our risk assessment and action plan.

Although voluntary, we strongly encourage all students to participate in this testing programme. Taking part not only ensures students return as healthy as can be, posing no risk to other individuals, but also allows them to practice correctly self-swabbing ahead of the move to home test kits.

Given the need to manage lateral flow testing as well as reopening school, we will be phasing our return. Students will come back as follows whether they take part in lateral flow testing or not:

- Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March – Years 11 and 10;
- Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> March – Years 9 and 8;
- Wednesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March – Year 7.

Onsite provision for children of key workers and other priority groups will continue throughout the phased opening with students re-joining their year group as they come back to school.

How we welcome students back on these days, including exact timings, will be determined by the number who participate in lateral flow **pre-testing**.

**The more students who pre-test this week, the easier it will be to open as normal each day for all students at the same time. Therefore, we ask families to support their child's access to a pre-test.**

### How to book a pre-test

Students can only access a lateral flow pre-test on the following days:

- Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> March – Years 11 and 10 (8.30am to 4.30pm);
- Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March – Years 9, 8 and 7 (8.30am to 4.30pm).

Appointments are made online as follows:

1. If not already submitted, complete the online consent form (one per child) on our website: [ryecollege.co.uk/mustknow/nhstesttrace](http://ryecollege.co.uk/mustknow/nhstesttrace)
2. Book your pre-test using the Parent Evening System by **midday** on **Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March**: [ryecollege.schoolcloud.co.uk](http://ryecollege.schoolcloud.co.uk) or [ryecollege.co.uk/mustknow/nhstesttrace](http://ryecollege.co.uk/mustknow/nhstesttrace)
3. Ensure your child arrives in plenty of time for their appointment wearing a face covering.



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Testing is held in the main hall and typically takes around 10-15 minutes. Further information and an instructional video are available on our website. Students must leave site once the test is complete. The college car park will be open during the hours of testing. All results are shared with parents via text and email using the national 'test and trace' system.

We understand a small minority of students may find it difficult to attend pre-testing whilst observing government guidance. Alternative arrangements for these students to access a pre-test on their return can be made however greater numbers may delay the start of the school day. If you would like to discuss individual access to testing, email [office@ryecollege.co.uk](mailto:office@ryecollege.co.uk) in the first instance.

Pre-testing will allow students to return straight to the classroom on the day of their return. Families should therefore plan to minimise any possible exposure to coronavirus over the days following the pre-test before coming back. Throughout the course of their first day back in school, we will also be carrying out the second of the three lateral flow tests young people take before the move to home test kits. More details on home test kits will follow – **all testing is free of charge.**

Once pre-test booking closes at **midday on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March**, we will be writing to families to confirm final arrangements for the return to school. Students will continue to receive remote education throughout this period.

UK Government has made clear that regardless of whether students participate in testing or not, **attendance to school is an expectation.** Students **MUST NOT** attend if they are shielding, self-isolating, displaying symptoms or have tested positive for coronavirus.

We understand that on this occasion, reopening brings additional complications. However, the reasons behind this are of the utmost importance especially with the rise of new variants. We have all worked so hard – both families and colleagues – to keep school as safe as possible for everyone who attends. This has resulted in a comparatively low number of positive cases – a record we wish to maintain. Whilst these arrangements may cause some inconvenience we believe it to be relatively minor considering the great reassurance the process offers us all.

Thank you for your continued support – we are genuinely looking forward to seeing our young people return in the coming days.

If you have any further questions feel free to email [office@ryecollege.co.uk](mailto:office@ryecollege.co.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Mr. D. Downes  
Head of College