

23 February 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

### **Reopening of College**

The Prime Minister announced on Monday that it will be safe to re-open schools and colleges from Monday 8 March 2021. This is in response to the national public health data, the success of the vaccination programme and the reduced pressure on NHS capacity.

The government achieved its target of vaccinating everyone in the four most vulnerable groups with their first dose by 15th February, and these groups will have developed immunity from the virus by 8th March. It is for this reason that the government now believes that it will be safe to commence the re-opening of schools and colleges from Monday 8th March.

It has always been my preference and that of my staff to get back to face-to-face learning as soon as it is safe to do so; the announcement earlier this week, will now allow us to prepare for this to happen. As a sixth form college, we have a degree of flexibility that schools do not have and consequently we are planning to stagger students' return so that any risk can be managed more effectively.

We had already planned for the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> March to be an assessment week for 'A' level students. These assessments will go ahead, as planned, but they will be sat remotely (from home). This will allow for a staged return to the College so that only BTEC, UAL and CTEC students will be expected to be physically on site on the 8<sup>th</sup> March. 'A' level students will not be expected in college for face to face learning until the following week, the 15<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Asymptomatic Testing**

As I have mentioned in earlier communications, the government expects all students to be tested for coronavirus on their return to college. These will be conducted using lateral flow tests on the College site, in the first instance. Whilst these tests are not mandatory, I would hope that the majority of students will consent to the tests in the interest of keeping everybody on the College site safe and well. The initial expectation is that students will be tested 3 times over a two-week period. Following this, students will be supplied with two tests each week to be conducted at home. As student consent is required, I am asking parents to discuss the tests with your son/ daughter and encourage them to consent to these tests. College staff will also be tested twice-weekly. Details of how to book a test will be emailed in due course.

I want to thank all students, once again, for doing their very best with remote learning in what have been extremely challenging circumstances. It has been lovely to hear the positive feedback from both students and parents.

Needless to say, all the health and safety measures in place prior to lockdown, including the wearing of face coverings in all areas of the College, will remain and it is expected that all students continue to adhere to these.

I look forward to welcoming all students back into college on the 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> March.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Thompson, Principal

**Please note: There will be no live lessons on Monday 1st March as this is a re-scheduled non-term day (from November). Instead, all students will be set work to complete remotely.**