



Our Ref: FCG/SJM

26 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your phenomenal support as students have returned to the Academy this term. It has been a pleasure to welcome all year groups back into the Academy and attendance has been high. Thank you to those of you who have supported the Asymptomatic Testing Programme which is also helping things to run safely.

Testing at home throughout the Easter holidays for schools and colleges
Following the success of the asymptomatic testing programme on the return to schools and colleges, it is important to keep testing at home throughout the Easter holidays and into the Summer term. Over Easter, all students and staff participating in asymptomatic testing should:

- continue to test twice a week at home over the Easter holidays
- report results online and to the Academy to help us to contact trace
- test before returning for the summer term, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back.

Additional testing kits for students to use over Easter will be made available to students prior to the break. Families and households can also access home test kits for adults by collecting a home test kit from a test site or by ordering a home test kit online.

Twice-weekly Testing after the Easter holidays

All students return to the Academy on Tuesday 20 April. After this, for the summer term, we suggest that twice weekly testing takes places for students on:

- Sunday evening/Monday morning
- Wednesday evening/Thursday morning

Please continue to report results to NHS Test and Trace following the instructions in the home test kit. Can I ask that you also share the result, whether void, positive or negative, with the Academy to help with contact tracing, this should be done by emailing covidtestingresults@somercotesacademy.co.uk. In the event of a positive result, can I **ask that you use the word "Positive" as the email subject** and also please telephone the Academy on 01507 353459 to make sure that we are aware. A flow chart explaining the testing process is attached for your information.

Free School Meal Provision over the Easter holidays

Families of children who are entitled to free school meals will receive a voucher for this period. This has been funded by the government through the COVID Winter Grant Scheme.

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Changes to the Test and Trace support payment for parents

Parents and carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their education setting or by NHS Test and Trace may be able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or a discretionary payment of £500, if they meet the eligibility criteria. This is to ensure that parents receive the financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibilities. Parents and carers should apply to their local authority to receive a payment. Once an application for a payment has been received, the local authority will contact the Academy to verify the details of the child provided on the application.

Arrangements for Year 11 Students

The Government has confirmed that in Summer 2021, students taking GCSEs should be awarded grades based on an assessment by their teachers. At the Academy, we are working with all of our Year 11 students to ensure that the grades that they receive reflect the work that they have done during their time at the Academy. Teachers will use a range of evidence to make a judgement of the grade they are performing at, this is likely to include: student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the exam board; internal practice papers and questions; longer pieces of class and homework (including those completed during remote learning); **records of students' work** and marks over the course and mock examination papers. Please be reassured that students will only be assessed on what they have been taught. Our marks and grades will be internally standardised and checked by the examination boards who will also check a sample of the evidence.

We understand that this is a concerning time for our students and want to work with them to create a calm and positive end to their time at Somercotes Academy. The time remaining in lessons will be balanced to complete teaching and carry out any assessments needed as evidence. Teachers are currently talking to students about the level of their work and what they need to do, following Easter, to secure their grades. Following the Easter holiday, students will be given the opportunity to carry out further assessments in the Academy which will form part of the evidence for their grades.

The last day of teaching in the Academy for our Year 11 students is Friday 11 June though some students may be required to attend after this date to complete any outstanding work. Students will receive their results for GCSEs on the 12 August.

Yours faithfully



Mrs F C Green
Principal

Covid-19 Testing at Somercotes Academy

