



# St Andrew the Apostle

## Greek Orthodox School

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well and that your children enjoyed their break away from remote learning over half term.

I am sure that you will have been following the Prime Minister's announcements yesterday regarding the 'roadmap' out of lockdown. The government has confirmed its intention for all students, in both primary and secondary schools, to return to school from Monday 8th March.

The government has issued lengthy revised guidance for schools which I have been digesting overnight with the senior leadership team. Secondary schools are being asked to offer students three lateral flow tests on site (leaving 3-5 days between each test) from 8th March. Testing remains optional but 'strongly encouraged'. Students can return to learning on site once they have had one negative test (or been offered one test and declined). After they have had their three tests onsite the government says that students will be able to test themselves at home twice weekly and that home testing kits will be provided for this purpose. The government therefore envisages schools operating lateral flow testing on site (a substantial undertaking), whilst bringing students back onto site for face-to-face teaching and maintaining remote learning for those who are awaiting testing. This will clearly be a significant challenge and I will write to you once we have more details of logistics from the government later this week .

The other notable change from the previous guidance is that students in all year groups in secondary schools will be expected to wear face coverings in classrooms, as well as in indoor communal areas as they were doing last term. The guidance also suggests that teachers should also wear face coverings when delivering lessons when social distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that this will present challenges for our students with hearing impairments and we are considering this.

We are still waiting to hear from the Department for Education about their decision on how grades will be calculated for Year 11 and Year 13 students this summer. We are expecting to hear something by the end of this week and again, I will write to you as soon as we have more information.

Thank you for your feedback in the recent parent survey. I will write to you in this week's newsletter about some of the changes we are implementing in response to the feedback we have gathered from staff, students and parents/carers. The feedback was very helpful and it was especially pleasing to see that we are closely aligned at St Andrew the Apostle School about what we know works well and what we need to do to improve where things are working less well.



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An immediate change that I am bringing in for the remaining period of remote learning is that we are moving to a lesson duration of 45 minutes to allow for a 5 minute comfort break for students and staff in between lessons. Please refer to next Friday's newsletter to see other changes that I have introduced this week which focus on strategies for a reduction in screen time for students and on improving the way that you will be able to contact staff where you have a specific query.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we plan to implement these changes. In the meantime, remote learning continues for all students.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our students back onto site and to the spring and summer months ahead.

Best wishes

Indira Warwick

**(Headteacher)**