



# Southend High School for Girls

An Academy Grammar School

Southchurch Boulevard, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 4UZ

Headteacher: Mr J Carey MEd (Cantab), BA (Hons), LLE, NPQEL

25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Further to the Prime Minister's announcement at the start of the week with the very welcome news that all students will return to school on a staggered start from 8 March, I write to keep you informed about subsequent government and school updates.

The Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson has written an open letter to parents; the link to this letter is [here](#).

In addition, further guidance for parents has been published by the DfE; the link to this information is [here](#).

You will see from the information that two, new safety measures have been planned for: face masks and testing.

## **Face masks**

We already put in place the wearing of face masks outside of classrooms before Christmas. However, the new guidance also recommends face masks in any area where social distancing is not possible, including classrooms.

*'Where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and pupils where social distancing cannot easily be maintained when moving around the premises outside of classrooms or teaching spaces, such as in corridors and communal areas. In the same settings for a limited period, we also recommend the use of face coverings in classrooms and other teaching spaces, unless wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons, or for those who are exempt from wearing a face covering as per government guidance.'*

## **Testing**

I am currently in regular communication with the local authority and the local Director of Public Health regarding LFTs (Lateral Flow Tests). In addition, I met with headteachers on Wednesday, with a further meeting scheduled tomorrow, to consider a joint approach across our local community.

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The guidance issued from the DfE this week states:

*'All secondary age pupils and students in most colleges who consent will be offered three rapid tests at school or college in the first two weeks of their return three to five days apart. This will help them to get used to swabbing themselves for the tests. Schools and colleges will then provide students with two rapid tests to use each week at home.'*

### **GCSE and A Levels**

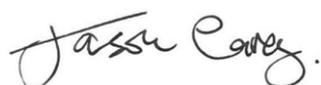
The Education Secretary yesterday set out more details on how the revised assessment process will work for results this summer. I summarise below the main points:

- A-level students will get their results on 10 August, while GCSE pupils will get their grades on 12 August.
- Grades will be awarded based on a range of evidence, including PPE exams, coursework, essays and in-class tests. Teachers will also be provided with optional, non-exam condition assessment questions for students to answer to help them decide what grades should be awarded.
- Grades will have to be submitted to exam boards by 18 June, with quality assurance checks then taking place.

The link to the more detailed information *'Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A level grades will be determined in summer 2021'* can be found [here](#). The main message to Year 13 and Year 11 students is to continue working hard, engaging with course content, and completing assessments. We will ensure that you are awarded the best grades you are capable of and deserve.

I will inform you as soon as possible once we have more details about the return to school.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Carey  
Headteacher