

3rd January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope you have had an enjoyable Christmas break and I wish you a happy new year. We are endlessly optimistic and hopeful for a more normal 2022 but we know that the coming weeks will be crucial. To that end, I am writing to remind you of some key details surrounding the return to school for students tomorrow (Tuesday 4th January 2022) and to set out some new information which was relayed to schools yesterday by the Department for Education.

Lateral Flow Testing and plans for students returning to classrooms (Tuesday 4th January

The Government has instructed all schools to conduct lateral flow testing for COVID-19 before children re-enter classrooms; these tests give 30-minute results, with the aim of allowing more students and staff to stay in school. We will begin testing on Tuesday morning and our intention is to get students into lessons as quickly as possible as soon as they have taken one LFD test and received a negative result. For us to achieve this ambitious goal it is important for students to arrive to school, sticking rigidly to the schedule below, and to report to their muster area.

Group of Students		Arrival time
Any child who takes a bus to get to school should take the bus as normal		0845 as normal
Remaining students who do not normally take the bus to school, by year group	Year 7	0900
	Year 8	0930
	Year 9	1000
	Year 10	1030
	Year 11	1100

Beyond this, regular LFD testing remains a crucial measure to help identify asymptomatic positive cases. We will provide students with more LFD tests to take home with them tomorrow and ask for your support to ensure your child continues to test twice weekly.

Face coverings for students, staff and visitors

Yesterday the Government wrote to all secondary schools recommending that students, staff and visitors (except those who are exempt) wear face coverings when indoors (classrooms and all communal areas) to reduce transmission of the virus at this crucial time. This guidance is a short-term measure only and will be reviewed on 26 January 2022. We will explain this change carefully to students upon their return and we have a supply of face





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coverings should your child forget to bring their own. Whilst we know some students might be nervous or disappointed by this news it is important to remember how resilient and adaptable our young people have been over the course of the pandemic and know that our students will see the importance of playing their part in maximising face to face education.

Changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

Since 22 December 2021 the mandatory 10-day isolation period for any individual who records a positive result on a PCR test has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances. Individuals can now take a LFD test on day 6 and 7 of their self-isolation period and those who receive two negative results are no longer required to complete the full 10 days. This is encouraging news and will, hopefully, allow more teachers and young people who are fit and well to return to the classroom quicker. Our attendance team will be on hand and will be in touch should you have any questions about when your child can return to the classroom as we get used to this new guidance.

Remote education

Finally, whilst we are hopeful that the measures, we've outlined above mean we can avoid partial closures we do need to be realistic in that a number of young people will need to self-isolate. In this instance we will invite your child to attend a live stream of their lesson via Microsoft Teams, according to their normal timetable. This is our preferred delivery model for most non-practical subjects, and whilst not an ideal substitute, ensures that your child hears the same messages and content as their peers in class. Again, our attendance team will share details and answer questions if your child is affected in this way.

Thank you for your ongoing patience and support whilst we adapt and navigate through these challenging times.

Yours sincerely

Richard Brand
Headteacher

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