

Monday 6th September

Dear Parent/carer

START OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS FOR SEPTEMBER 2021

Please be aware that we have had to make some changes to our start of term arrangements for September. These are in response to the Department for Education's recent request that all secondary school students receive two negative lateral flow tests for Covid-19 when returning to school in September (3-5 days apart). One of these tests can be taken at home, but the other should take place in school, hence our need to develop a staggered start to the term to accommodate this mass testing in school as we have previously done.

It is hoped that these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely in the new term. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible.

The tests are voluntary, however we strongly recommend families continue to support testing to prevent disruption once students return. If you have previously provided consent then we do not require you to do so again - this can be continued into the next academic year. All new pupils will be tested unless you decide to opt out- this can be done by contacting the school before their planned return date.

Any student receiving a positive lateral test result in the school will receive a phone call straight away to parents/carers to notify them. Positive cases will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). School will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home or you can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

If your child's test is negative, you will not be notified.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Students (aged under 18 years 6 months) who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal. They do not need to wear a face covering within the school (but it is recommended when social distancing is difficult). It is expected that face coverings are worn when travelling on public or dedicated school transport.

To accommodate the testing programme in school, and allow staff to carry on their usual start of term duties, we will need to operate a staggered start to term where certain year groups come into school for their lateral flow tests and return to education on a specific day. The year groups will start school as follows:

Year 7/8- Wednesday 8th September

Year 9/10- Thursday 9th September

Year 11- Friday 10th September

Do not send your child to school if:

- they are showing one or more [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- they have had a positive test result
- there are other reasons requiring them to stay at home, for example, they are [required to quarantine](#)

Many Thanks

Lee Thompson

Head of Curriculum