



10 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you with an update regarding the COVID-19 testing programme following the Christmas holiday period.

As you may be aware the government/DfE have stated that all secondary schools should carry out on-site Covid-19 testing of all students prior to them returning to lessons in January.

This is due to concerns over the new Omicron variant and there being no restrictions on socialising over the Christmas period making transmission more likely. This on-site testing will therefore help to identify positive cases of Covid-19 and reduce community transmission, which in turn will help to support the continuity of education. Hence, they are recommending students have this one on-site test before they return to twice weekly home testing.

As you are aware to test and process the results for over 1200 students is a logistical challenge involving a lot of staffing and I am sorry to say this will mean a slightly staggered start to the new term. We will need to stagger the return of students over the first two days of term to ensure this is carried out in a safe, well-planned and effective manner, ensuring the health and safety of all students and staff. **We are trying to get all of the students back in as quickly as we can and we appreciate your understanding around this.**

In order to manage this phased return, **students will therefore need to come into school for their first lateral flow test the day before they return to school for lessons. They will only attend that day for their LFD test.**

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Tuesday 4 Jan	Remote Learning LFD Test 10.00 – 11.30	Remote Learning	Remote Learning	Remote Learning	Remote Learning LFD Test 1.30 – 3.00	Remote Learning LFD Test 12.00 – 1.00	Remote Learning LFD Test 12.00 – 1.00
Wednesday 5 Jan		Remote Learning LFD Test 9.00 – 10.45	Remote Learning LFD Test 11.00 – 12.45	Remote Learning LFD Test 1.30 – 3.00			

The full timetable will then begin on Thursday 6 January.

Although this testing is not compulsory, or a return to school conditional on having a test, we strongly advise all students to attend.

Those students taking the self-administered test will be supervised by trained staff and volunteers. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose. The tests we are using are the Orient Gene tests which only need a nasal swab. Students will be tested in one of the Gyms within our school building. Please ensure that your child arrives on time as we want to avoid congestion or students loitering unnecessarily. After your child has received their test, they will be directed to leave via the main school gate at the front of the school. It is important they do not loiter outside the school to meet up with their friends as this could be counter-productive to school's safe return.

Students are not required to wear their uniform as they will only be on site for a matter of minutes however, we would advise wearing sensible/appropriate clothing and to keep a check on the weather as there is a possibility that students may need to wait outside until they are called forward. They will only be on site for around twenty minutes.

We have had a number of queries about young people who have had COVID-19. The advice is that anyone who has previously received a positive COVID-19 PCR test result should NOT be re-tested within 90 days of that test unless they develop any new symptoms of COVID-19. You will therefore not need to undertake these tests if this applies to you.

Finally, just to remind you that if a parent does not give consent and the child does not undertake a test on the allocated day, they will still be able to return as normal the following day.

Consent

Of course, we will need your consent for your child to be tested. Testing is voluntary but strongly encouraged. We will only be able to test your child if you give consent. If you gave consent back in March or September for the in-school testing you do NOT need to do so again. If you are new to the school or did not give consent last time, please can you complete the consent form in the link below. In some browsers you may need to copy the link to the browser window.

<https://tinyurl.com/efmf3kzt>

If you are happy for your child to be tested in school you MUST complete this form to give consent.

Remote learning

Remote learning will begin from 11.00am on Tuesday 4 January. Please encourage your child to engage with this for the day or two they are not in school. Below are some reminders:

- All work will be set via Microsoft Teams in advance of timetabled lessons. Work should include a narrated PowerPoint for students to work through.
- Students will be expected to work to their school timetable as far as is possible. Break will be 10.40 - 10.55 and lunch will be 11.45 - 12.25.
- Students should check their e-mail and Teams regularly.
- Lessons will begin at 8.55am as normal and all resources will be shared on Teams. During their timetabled lesson times, teachers will lead the lesson via the Teams Chat function wherever possible so students should log into Teams and join the lesson they have on their timetable. Where teachers are unable to lead the lesson 'live' they will still provide work, usually including a narrated PowerPoint, for students to work through.

- Form tutors will lead tutor sessions.
- If students are unable to follow their timetable at the designated times for any reason, for example due to shared IT, they will still be able to access the work in Teams and should aim to complete some work for every lesson they would have had that day.
- Students should share their work with their teachers electronically where possible. Not all work will be marked, just as it would not if they were in school, however teachers will respond to work submitted.
- If your child is unable to complete work electronically, please let us know.

I was hoping that staggered starts to new terms had come to an end so I am sorry to be sending you this letter with our adapted arrangements for the start of the Spring Term as a consequence of on-site testing.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian D. Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Mr Wilkinson
Headteacher