

7th January 2022

Dear parents/carers

Happy New Year! We hope that you have had a good Christmas break together.

Things linked to the pandemic are still difficult for everyone and we wanted to write to you with as much information as we know so far so that you feel confident about what is in place and the direction of travel for schools.

As you are aware, we will be testing all year groups on Monday 10th January before they return to schooling on Tuesday 11th January. This testing will be crucial to prevent the spread of the virus in school upon return and because of the national shortage of lateral flow devices. Here is a reminder of the times that your child should come to school, with a mask on, ready for their lateral flow test.

Time Slot	Year	Tutor Groups
08:50 - 09:10	Year 8	A,B,C
09:10 - 09:30	Year 8	D,E,F
09:30 - 09:50	Year 8	G,H,X
09:50 - 10:10	Year 7	A,B
10:10 - 10:30	Year 7	C,D,E
10:30 - 10:50	Year 7	F,G,H,X
11:10 - 11:30	Year 9	A,B,C
11:30 - 11:50	Year 9	D,E,F
11:50 - 12:10	Year 9	G,H,X
12:10 - 12:30	Year 10	A,B
12:30 - 12:50	Year 10	C,D,E
12:50 - 13:10	Year 10	F,G,H,X
13:50 - 14:10	Year 11	A,C,E
14:10 - 14:30	Year 11	F,G,H,X

1. Children being taught on site

The most important message that the Government has sent so far, is their intention to keep schools open as much as possible. Should the school need to convert to teaching remotely (at home) this will

only be because the number of staff not able to attend through isolation has reached a critical mass and there are not enough staff to supervise children safely or that the UK Health Security Agency (previously Public Health England) have suggested that this is a measure that needs to be taken because of a large outbreak.

As we might be dealing with large levels of absence and still trying to teach everyone on site, it *may* mean that school, and the teaching and learning that happens in school, *may* have to be adjusted in different ways to cope with potential absences. Options may include:

- Classes collapsed and taught together in a bigger area
- Classes taught by someone who is remote live teaching from home with another staff member supervising in school
- Classes supervised by non-teaching staff
- Classes taught by staff who are not their usual teachers

There *may* be other changes that we have to make, and, by the same token, there may be no changes. We are preparing for all eventualities to make sure that children, wherever possible can continue to be taught on site.

2. Updated COVID-19 safety measures

Until further notice, all students and staff will wear face masks indoors (including classrooms) to try to prevent the spread of virus.

Those who have already identified as being exempt will continue to be so.

Please organise for your child to bring in their own masks from now on. We have spares that we are happy to provide for those who occasionally may forget or may need a new one but, as masks are mandatory around the country, we expect that students should be able to provide their own.

If you are struggling to get a mask for your child, please let their Head of House know so we can support you.

Ventilation in classrooms will continue to be in force. If the classroom is cold, the teacher will allow students to put their coats on. Please encourage your children to bring warm coats, hats, scarves etc this winter (even though we know that often they don't feel they are fashionable!). Hoodies will still not be necessary and are not school uniform, because coats should be available.

3. Regular Lateral Flow Testing

The Government has now said that, if you test positive on a lateral flow device, from the 11th January, you will not need to get a PCR test to confirm if you are positive.

Regular testing for students will be essential to stop the spread and we will still be providing testing kits for the children to bring home. We will continue to text you when these tests are being sent.

It is also important that the test results are logged with the NHS and with school so that they can monitor cases in the area and the school. The link to the school site is <https://forms.office.com/r/gJQpbUANQq>

We still ask that you contact the academy as soon as is possible, if your child has tested positive and they will be isolating. Should they be well enough, work will be provided for them on their Microsoft Teams area that will be in line with what they would be learning in class.

4. Students returning after negative lateral flow tests

If a student has tested positive, they can take a lateral flow test from 6 days after the day their symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if they did not have symptoms), and another lateral flow test on the following day. The second lateral flow should be taken at least 24 hours later. If both these test results are negative, and they do not have a high temperature, they may end self-isolation immediately after the second negative test result.

They should stop testing after they have had 2 consecutive negative test results and can return to their education setting on the 7th day if they have tested negative in the morning unless they still have a temperature. If they still have a temperature, then the NHS guidelines around isolation should be followed.

5. Exams and mock exams

Examinations and their schedules currently remain the same and will take place as planned.

Finally, students return to teaching on site on Tuesday 11th at the normal time and via the previous school gates.

We look forward to seeing the students and getting back to their routines with them.

Wishing you all good health.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Miss Salt'.

Miss Nia Salt
Principal