



14th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID-19

As the country moves into an alert level four due to the spread of the Omicron variant I would like to share with you some important updates on the government's response for schools that I received last night.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19

From Tuesday 14 December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 is being introduced (including until the end of this term). All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the Online Reporting System and to the school. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of school, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the Sunday 12 December press release. This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return in January.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and order a PCR test to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.

If you have run out of tests you can get extra LFD tests from local pharmacies or online.

Finally, it is important to continue regular twice weekly, at-home testing for all students.

Vaccinations

16 and 17 year olds can get two doses of the COVID vaccine. They can book an appointment through the national booking service and walk in centres are available.

The Health and Social Care Secretary announced on Monday 29 November that young people aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Parents of children aged 12-15 that have not yet had their first vaccine can book their child's first vaccination slot over the winter break via the [national booking system](#).



Masks on the Corridors and in Communal Areas

Please ensure that your child is in possession of a facemask for use when walking around the site, on the corridors and in communal areas. Students should also wear facemasks on school buses and public transport.

Changes to the start of term in January

The government have asked all secondary schools to provide an on-site test for students on return in January. Testing in school will help reduce transmission after the Christmas holidays.

In order for us to conduct these tests safely and reduce the risk of transmission in the return to school there will be a staggered start to the term as follows:

Wednesday 5th January

Students in Year 11, 12 and 13 return to school and go straight to tutor rooms. On-site testing during tutor time and period one. Lessons as normal for Years 11, 12 and 13 from period two. Students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 remain at home.

Thursday 6th January

Students in Years 9 and 10 return to school and go straight to tutor rooms. On-site testing during tutor time and period one. Extended tutor time for all students and lessons as normal for Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 from period two. Students in Years 7 and 8 remain at home.

Friday 7th January

Students in Years 7 and 8 return to school and go straight to tutor rooms. On-site testing during tutor time and period one. Extended tutor time for all students and lessons as normal all students from period two.

Thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring the safety of our school community in these challenging times.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs C Whitehead
Principal