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3 January 2022

Dear Parents

We are looking forward to seeing everyone return to school for face-to-face education this week. We appreciate that there is some anxiety about the Omicron variant and difficulties that this might present. Attending school in person is the best way for our children to learn. I want to reassure you that we continue to prioritise this whilst balancing the ongoing risks presented by Covid-19. With that in mind please read and take note of *all* these important reminders about the return to school this term.

**Most importantly of all, please do not send your child to school or to be tested at school** if they are showing *any* symptoms of Covid-19. [Instead you must self isolate and follow the latest national guidance.](#)

**On site testing & return to school this week.**

All students are encouraged to attend school on **Tuesday 4 January** to be **tested once** before their return to lessons. Details of the testing schedule can be found on [the college website here](#). In summary:

**Year 11 and Year 10 students** will be tested as [per the schedule](#) and stay at school following their normal timetable on **Tuesday 4 January**.

**Year 7, 8 and 9 students** will be tested [as per the schedule](#) on **Tuesday 4 January**. They will go home immediately following their test. They will return to school and follow their normal timetable on **Wednesday 5 January**.

**The guidance on testing if you have had COVID within the last 90 days has changed.** Even if your child tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are **strongly encouraged** to take part in testing on-site on **Tuesday 4 January**.

**If your child has tested positive for COVID during the school holiday**, they should test at home once they have completed their isolation period before returning to school.

After testing at school, students should continue to test at home twice a week. LFD testing kits will be provided to students this week. All test results should be reported on the [NHS track and trace service here](#).

**Self isolation rules have changed**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8.

### **Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19**

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

### **Updated guidance on the use of face coverings in education settings**

From Sunday 2 January, the DFE recommended that face coverings be worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term. This recommendation will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, at which point it will be reviewed by the DFE. If you are concerned about your child wearing a face mask please contact the school [office](#) and one of our pastoral team members will contact you.

I recognise that high rates of COVID may cause difficulties with staffing this term. My priority is to keep the school open and I will be working with my team to develop strategies to continue to provide face-to-face education. I would like to remind you that our [remote learning plan](#) for students in isolation is available on the college website here and is kept under constant review.

Thank you for your cooperation in these challenging times.

Yours faithfully

Mr Edward Rodriguez