

TG 2/21

Dear Parents/Carers

Covid-19 Testing

As you will know, we are able to receive children back into school from Monday 8th March. We are expected to conduct mass asymptomatic Lateral Flow testing for all students three times per student upon their return and that testing is for two reasons.

- To identify any asymptomatic positive students, so that they and their close contacts can isolate for 10 days at home before returning to school, so that we can do what we can to keep the infection rate as low as possible.
- To train all students in how to self-administer the tests, because once three have been completed we will be providing Home Testing kits so that continuous testing can take place, again to identify asymptomatic positive cases as above. Needless to say, any student testing positive from a Home test will need to inform the school and isolate.

'I am already trained and conduct Lateral Flow tests as part of my job'. If this statement applies to you, and you are able to conduct tests on your child at home, it seems absurd not to. If this is the case, please let us supply you with Home Testing kits if needed, and this will save time for the testing that will be done at school. Please contact reception to communicate this to us.

We do not have the testing capacity to test all students in a day, so we will have to stagger the return to school. Below is our testing and 'return to school' schedule.

*Friday 5th March	All College students testing to take place for a return to College on Monday 8th
*Monday 8th	Years 11 & 10 (return to school on this day)
*Tuesday 9th	Years 8 & 9 (return to school on this day)
Wednesday 10th	Years 13 & 7 (return to school on this day for Year7)
Thursday 11th	Years 10 & 11
Friday 12th	Years 8 & 9
Monday 15th	Years 7 & 12
Tuesday 16th	Years 13 & 10
Wednesday 17th	Years 9 & 11
Thursday 18th	Years 8 & 12
Friday 19th	Year 7

*There will be no live lessons for College students on 5th March. However, work will be set on Teams for students to complete independently. There will be work set on Teams for Years 7,8,&9 on Monday 8th, and for Year 7 on Tuesday 9th.

Once this schedule has been worked through we will distribute Home Testing kits on an ongoing basis, until instructed not to by the government. For your information, all staff will also be provided with Home Testing kits from the start of our return.

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Please remember that without parental consent we cannot test your child, **so if you haven't done so already, please fill in the form via the link at the end of this letter.** Although being tested is not compulsory, the school strongly supports this testing and asks you to support it too, in an attempt to do what we can to keep us as Covid free as possible. College students can provide their own consent if required.

Those who do not wish to be tested are still allowed to return to school, and should do so on the day that their year group returns.

Face coverings and 'the rule of 6'

Upon return to school we will require all students to wear face coverings at all times when social distancing is not possible, unless they are medically exempt. This is only a small change for us, as we had already established face coverings were to be used whenever moving between rooms, and indeed in some classrooms. There has been some debate in the press about the legality of insisting on the wearing of face coverings, but we are firmly of the opinion that other than in the case of an individual being exempt on medical grounds, and being able to produce supporting documentation, we will insist on face coverings being worn. This does not apply when outside.

We will also be introducing a 'rule of 6', in that we will only allow group of friends to gather in groups up to 6 in number. It has been frustrating to see students appear to make almost no effort at all to distance once not being closely supervised, and I hope this rule makes it even easier to remember to do so.

Other than those new measures, our risk mitigation measures remain the same as before. However, due to the increased infection rate of the new variant, we cannot become complacent and these additional measures will be in place until advised otherwise.

Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) for Years 11 & 13

We are now in receipt of the guidance on the creation of CAGs. It is rather vague but we are now in the process of forming our plan for these. Once done, we will share information with students and parents of Years 11 & 13.

This is a time of great optimism; if we all act responsibly and compel our children to do the same we can look forward to the end of the restrictions and stresses of the last year. I hope this is the start of life getting back to normal. It has been an incredibly difficult period in so many ways, but if we all do our bit it appears that the 'end' is in sight.

Please follow this [link](#) to the consent form for the Lateral Flow test, if you have not completed it already.

As always, please do contact me with any queries you might have.

Yours sincerely,
Tim Gibbs