



17 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update and Home Testing

I wanted to thank and congratulate all students for how positively they have returned to school and how they have quickly adapted both to the existing and to the additional arrangements for ensuring the school is Covid-secure. We are so pleased to welcome them back and return to some normality. Thank you also to all parents for your support with ensuring that your child is wearing full uniform each day, ready to learn.

However, we would ask for your support in ensuring your child is not wearing a hoodie to school. Hoodies are NOT part of our academy uniform and any child who wears a hoodie to school will be asked to remove it. For warmth, students can wear a school jumper under their blazer and/or a waterproof coat.

It is very encouraging that so many of our students either walk or cycle to school. However, post lockdown, a small number of students have arrived at school on electric scooters. We remind parents that these are banned from school site. Under UK law, electric scooters can only be ridden on private land.

It has been particularly pleasing to see the overwhelming majority of students taking part in the in-school testing programme which is giving us all a greater sense of reassurance as we have come back together in school. It is proving a vital tool in our efforts to minimise the risk of the virus.

So far, the in-school testing has identified one positive case who was asymptomatic. Guidance has been followed and a small number of students have been asked to self-isolate as a result.

At Home Testing

Now that the in-school testing is complete and each student has been tested three times, we will be adopting the Government's at-home testing regime. This will involve students being given testing kits to take home twice a week for their own use. These will be distributed to students on:

Thursday 18 March Years 10-13

Friday 19 March Years 7-9

Students will be expected to take the test at home twice a week on a Sunday and a Wednesday evening. When your child gets their first at-home testing kit, full details of exactly what you need to do will be provided within the kit.

The first testing kit will be used before the Easter break. Students should begin to use the second testing kit on Sunday 18 April before they return to school on Tuesday 20 April.



Participation in this testing programme is very important for us as a community; it is not compulsory but taking part benefits us all, helping to keep us and our families and friends safer.

The results of each test must be reported to NHS Test and Trace (instructions on how to do this will be included with the kits). We are also asking you to report the results to us at school, using this form <https://bit.ly/3cG3nHL> as the NHS data is not shared with us. Please report the result of the test – both to NHS Test and Trace and school – even if it is negative or void. Doing this will help scientists and medical experts identify where cases are occurring and what further action, if any, they need to take. It will also help us with our contact tracing in school and to understand if there are any issues with the testing programme that we need to address. (A full privacy statement about how the information will be used is here <https://bit.ly/3eGuq8x>).

Staff at school will likewise continue to be tested regularly. I firmly believe that it is vital for each of us to play our part in this testing programme so that we can all be safer, at less risk and able to manage future cases in our community more quickly, should they occur, and with less impact on everyone's daily lives.

As we move out of lockdown and, we hope, back to a more normal time, the scientists and medical experts will be relying on us all to do our bit to keep monitoring cases in our communities. What has become clear in the research the government has published is that schools have not been places where there has been significant spreading of the virus but, if there are high numbers of cases in a school, this is likely to be the result of high levels of community cases nearby.

End of term arrangements

We all want to end the Spring Term with everyone in school and to make the most of face-to-face learning. Please help us to make this possible and ensure your child completes their at-home testing twice a week and always report the outcome both to the school and the NHS Test and Trace.

A reminder that this term ends on Wednesday 31 March. Thursday 1 April is a parent consultation morning for parents of students in Years 8 and 9.

Thank you once again for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Alison Merrills
Principal