

10th December 2021

Dear families,

Re: COVID-19 update and implications for the return to school in January

I am sure that you will all be aware of the new variant of concern (Omicron) which is developing across the UK. As a result, we have been given further advice from the DFE and Public Health England on measures that we will have to implement on our return to school in the New Year. This letter will highlight those measures and how this will affect the return to school in January. I have also taken this opportunity to remind families of our current guidance and school COVID-19 measures.

Mass testing on return to school in January

All schools have been advised that they are to test all students on return from the Christmas break. This is a large-scale operation, but one which the school has become accustomed to. In order to minimise disruption to the school day, and disruption to learning, we will be staggering our return to school with lessons in years 7 and 8 starting online. The school return will be as follows.

Date	Day	Year group tested	Year group online
Monday 3 rd January	Bank holiday	School closed	-
Tuesday 4 th January	Staff PD Day	Year 11 (am). Y10 (pm)	-
Wednesday 5 th January	Normal for years 9, 10 and 11	Year 9	Years 7 and 8
Thursday 6 th January	Normal for years 8, 9, 10 and 11	Year 8	Year 7
Friday 7 th January	Normal school day	Year 7	-

On PD day, year 11 will be invited into school between 8:30am -11:30am to be tested, and year 10 will be invited in between 12pm – 3pm. Once the school returns on Wednesday, KS3 students will receive a slip with a time for their test during CLL on the day they return.

As a result of our testing, the canteen will not be available during the first week back so all students will need to bring a packed lunch. Those students in receipt of free school meals will be able to collect a packed lunch from the dining hall on arrival to school in the morning, if they are in school. Those learning online who are in receipt of free school meals will receive a voucher from school vouchers, via email.

Current isolation guidance for families

- Where students are identified as a household contact of a positive case, it is recommended that they take a PCR test. In addition, all children within the household should take daily LFT tests for a period of 7 school days. If the PCR test is negative, then the children should continue to attend school.

- If a student shows symptoms of COVID-19, it is important that they do not come into school and are taken for a PCR test at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Any member of a household who receives a positive PCR result should isolate from the date they first started displaying symptoms.
- Any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age. You will be contacted directly and told to isolate.

Stepped up measures to continue from the start of the new term

We will continue to monitor and review our stepped-up COVID-19 measures and continue to follow the guidance provided by Public Health England and the Health Protection Hub. Therefore, from January we will continue to implement the following measures. With the increased level of ventilation we are adding to classrooms it will be cold in some areas of the school. Therefore, we are allowing students to wear a plain black v-neck jumper under their blazers. We have also advised staff that if it is particularly cold, then students may also wear their coats. They will also be allowed, in the short term, to do so in the canteen.

Face masks

All staff and students will be expected to wear face coverings in the buildings at all times. They will also be expected to wear them on school transport.

Staggered end to the day

We will continue with the staggered end to the day and shorter lunchtime. This means that period 6 will begin at 2.05pm. Students will leave the school site at the following times:

- Year 7: 3.05pm
- Year 8: 3.07pm
- Year 9: 3.09pm
- Year 10: 3.11pm
- Year 11: 3.13pm

Year group bubbles and clubs

Students remain within their year group bubbles at all times. The only exception to this would be for clubs where there are multiple year groups attending. If this is the case, then the member of staff leading the activity will ensure that those attending remain within their own year group bubbles during the activity.

To ensure the bubbles can be maintained within the canteen, students will access via different doors at break time and be encouraged to eat their purchased food in their designated year group social areas. If they choose to stay within the canteen, there will be limited seating space and students will be expected to sit only in areas designated for their year group. At lunchtime, the queue will be staggered so that those in years 10 and 11 will have access at a different time to years 7, 8 and 9.



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Online meetings and assemblies

Assemblies and other large gatherings will be completed online. If a meeting does need to be held where it is difficult to conduct the meeting online (Platinum Students for example), then these meetings will be held in a large space with social distancing enforced. They will also be kept as short as possible.

School visitors

All school visitors will be expected to wear a face covering on entering the school building and adhere to social distancing rules of a two-metre distance.

Yours sincerely,



Ben Morgan
Acting Principal



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