



Our Ref: LTM/kmd/updatesept

14 July 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Updates for September 2021

As we approach the end of the academic year, we would like to thank all students, families, staff, colleagues, and friends across our school community for the support and positivity they have shown throughout the year.

We will shortly be circulating our end of year journal which further celebrates the amazing achievements of our students who have shown such determination, resilience and support for each other during the most challenging times; we are proud of every individual.

At this time we thought it was important to provide some updates regarding arrangements for September. We will be making contact again over the summer period, although clearly there are lots of questions that we can only now start to answer following the most recent government updates. We anticipate that the following information may be subject to change, although it does reflect current guidance; the text shown in italics is direct government advice.

COVID Asymptomatic Testing

Schools will only provide tests for twice weekly asymptomatic testing for pupils and staff over the summer period if they are attending school settings. Therefore, we will not be providing testing kits for use during the school holidays. However, testing kits can be collected either from your local pharmacy or ordered online.

Pupils will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school pupils should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term; schools can stagger return of pupils to manage this. Pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

We will be providing further information regarding testing at school and intend to stagger the start of the academic year for all students, whose return dates will be as follows:

- Tuesday, 7th September - Year 7 & Year 12 (6th form registration)
- Wednesday, 8th September - Year 11 & Year 13
- Thursday, 9th September - Year 8
- Friday, 10th September - Year 9
- Monday, 13th September - Year 10

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that children attend school. All students are expected to be in school from their published start date and be on site by 8:40am where they will be greeted by staff on arrival.

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Management of positive COVID cases in school

Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance. They will also need to get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID19. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the individual can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Covid-19

When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test pupils, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do. They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, if they are required to quarantine).

If anyone in school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, they should be sent home and they should follow public health advice.

Tracing close contacts and isolation

Close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test.

We therefore do not expect to be actively tracing close contacts should any of our students test positive for Covid-19 as this will be undertaken through NHS Test and Trace.

Bubbles

The Government has said that on their return, students will no longer need to stay in year group 'bubbles'; this means that students may have contact with those in other year groups.

This is good news for students and staff as we can reset key elements of the school day. Although we will still meet and greet students on arrival, there will no longer be the need for meeting zones between lessons or a requirement for a split break and lunch time.

We will be keeping some procedures such as the one-way system for identified parts of the school site as these ways of working will continue to support the effective management of the site throughout the school day. We will communicate these and further details to students on their arrival back with us in September.

In addition, the many clubs, activities, trips and visits which have been on hold for so long will be able to resume while staff are able to implement a wider range of teaching strategies within the classrooms which have been limited due to control measures previously required.

Control Measures

Hygiene / Ventilation

Whilst restrictions around year bubbles are being removed, we will maintain our focus on cleanliness and hygiene. We will continue to more frequently wipe down surfaces and contact points, expect all to wash / sanitise their hands regularly and operate the 'catch it, kill it, bin it' approach.

We will maintain air flow through doors being kept open / removed, windows opened where possible, while maintaining a comfortable temperature, and expect students to be outdoors at break/lunch where possible after they have eaten.

Face coverings

Unless local Covid-19 cases require a return of restrictions, students will not be required to wear a face covering; we understand that this will also apply to school transport. Where students wish to wear a face covering in communal areas, we will allow them to do so, however students should not wear a face covering in lessons which may hinder teaching and learning.

Visitors

Visitors, including parents/carers, are asked to continue to make an appointment through school Reception if wishing to visit in person. We will expect visitors to hand sanitise on entry and support our hygiene measures.

Other Information

- We will be providing all students with key information about how school changes will impact on them when they return to school in September.
- All school transport will be running as usual from Tuesday, 7th September.
- The school canteen will be fully operational from the start of term; students should ensure they have credit on their accounts should they wish to access this.
- Students are expected to return to school in full school uniform and be fully equipped for all lessons. We have communicated expectations to students and families over recent months (particularly in relation to footwear and skirt length) and look forward to receiving parental support with this.
- A reminder that all key information is available on the school website.

In summary, our aim is to Reset and Re-Establish the outstanding opportunities which are available to all those within our school, ensuring that all students and staff have a positive start to the new academic year and can feel confident and happy moving forward, something we should all feel optimistic towards.

I wish you all the very best for what I hope will be a relaxing summer period for you and look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new academic year.

Yours sincerely



Lee Tristham
Headteacher