



26th February 2021

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Dear Parent/Carers

We are now able to confirm the details of our Covid testing and return to school programme. We are now able to start testing prior to the 8th March in order to complete this before students return to lessons. Attendance on site prior to the 8th is only for testing and students must strictly observe social distancing whilst on site and travelling to and from school.

Please find below a summary of the school's programme. Heads of Year will write later today with timings by tutor groups.

Testing Dates

Year Group	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3
7	Friday 5 th	Wednesday 10 th	Monday 15 th
8	Thursday 4 th	Tuesday 9 th	Friday 12 th
9	Thursday 4 th	Tuesday 9 th	Friday 12 th
10	Thursday 4 th	Tuesday 9 th	Friday 12 th
11	Wednesday 3 rd	Monday 8 th	Thursday 11 th
12	Wednesday 3 rd	Monday 8 th	Thursday 11 th
13	Friday 5 th	Monday 8 th	Thursday 11 th

Return to lessons in school

Year Group	Date
7	Friday 12 th
8	Friday 12 th
9	Friday 12 th
10	Wednesday 10 th
11	Tuesday 9 th
12	Tuesday 9 th
13	Tuesday 9 th

Consent

It is strongly encouraged that students participate in the testing to keep themselves and others safe. We would be grateful if your consent could be given as soon as possible on the SIMS app or by printing and returning the form to school. Instructions were in Tuesday's letter.

Prior to arrival for testing

Please could you share with the students the attached document so that they understand the testing process. They will also be shown a video by their tutors next week. Students should wear a mask and walk/cycle to school where possible. To reduce numbers on site we ask parents not to accompany the students.

We know that some students may be anxious about testing. Please reassure them that they will be looked after, lots of faces in the test centre will be very familiar and they will be supported through each step. We have been operating the centre since the start of January, our priority students have taken the test many times so the team are familiar with the process, looking after them will be our priority.

On arrival

Please arrive at the correct time. Students should report to the rear door of the small hall in the Sports Complex (staff will be there to direct you). Students should wear a face covering, sanitise their hands and stick to the 2m distance markers on the floor.

Registration

To help speed up the process, students will be pre-registered onto the NHS test system using the details we already hold. At the registration desk we will check that consent has been given and issue a named test card with a set of barcodes.

Testing

Students will then be directed to the sports hall, using the 2m distance markers on the floor to maintain social distance in the queue. Once at the front of the queue, students will be sent to a numbered bay. At the bay a member of staff will ask the student to sanitise their hands and remove their mask, and talk them through how to swab their mouth and nose, staff will absolutely look after them during the process.

Once the student has completed the swab, they will be asked to replace their mask and wipe down surfaces. Students will then follow the one-way system and exit the building. They should go straight home or back to lessons (if you have already returned to school).

Results

We will process the tests on site and a result will be sent to the primary contact email and phone number on the school system. We have had some minor issues with the delivery of results through the NHS test system so if there is a positive test result we will contact you directly. If you do not receive the NHS message or a call from school, the test will have been negative. If there is a positive test then government advice regarding isolation must be followed. Students do not need a confirmatory PCR test when the test has been completed under supervision at school.

Home testing

We are carrying out mass testing not only to keep the community safe but to train the students in how to test effectively. From the week beginning 15th March we will issue students with home testing kits. The

expectation is that students will test twice weekly at home for the remainder of this term with families responsible for reporting the results. (We will issue full information when we have it).

Online Learning

As you can see from the programme above, a great many staff will be involved in testing. By bringing the testing forward we are trying to minimise disruption once the students return and make the most of face to face learning for the rest of this term. To test, plan and re-open quickly and safely will inevitably mean a reduction in live lessons. Therefore, from Friday 5th March, staff have been asked to deliver live lessons where possible, but otherwise to ensure independent work is set via Google Classroom. We would still like students to follow the timetable and access Google Classroom at the designated time to complete set work or attend the live lesson. Registers will be taken as normal during live lessons or by the teacher checking that the work has been uploaded. If students are having a Covid test they should catch up with work set when they return home.

Priority students

Those students who are currently attending school will be able to do so from Monday 8th March to Thursday 11th March. However, we would appreciate if students only attend where absolutely necessary as resources will be tight during that week.

Frequently asked questions

What happens if we receive a positive result?

We will follow the same procedures as Test and Trace. Positive cases and close contacts have to isolate for 10 days.

What about those who have already received a vaccination?

Those who have had a vaccine will still need to test, at present those vaccinated may still carry the virus. If a positive result is received the isolation rules still apply.

What about those with a confirmed positive case?

If you have a confirmed positive result in the last 90 days you are not required to test. If you do attend and receive a positive result, the isolation rules will still apply.

Is testing compulsory?

No. However, we are strongly encouraging participation to keep the whole community as safe as possible.

Are staff testing?

Yes. Staff will be able to test twice a week.

Will staff absence be an issue?

Potentially. A small number of staff may not be able to attend the site for personal reasons or due to isolation. Where possible, staff will deliver live lessons from home with a Learning Supervisor monitoring the class.

Do I have to attend school?

Yes. The government have restored the normal legal requirements regarding school attendance. Individual concerns should be addressed to your Head of Year.

Finally

As I said, Heads of Year will issue a letter with specific test timings. Please complete your consent to testing as soon as possible. I will write again next week with further information regarding the return to face to face lessons, exam grades and catch-up.

In the meantime, thank you so much for your ongoing support. Whilst it may be a busy couple of weeks, we are delighted to be welcoming the students back we will support them through the testing process and look forward to seeing them soon.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Matthews', with a long, sweeping underline.

Mr S Matthews
Headteacher