



Dear Parents and Carers,

A reminder of the staggered start times for those students yet to return is below:

- Year 7 return date: **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 8.35 AM**
- Year 10 return date: **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 12.20 PM** (N.B. normal lunchtime for all Year 10)
- Year 8 return date: **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 8.35 AM**

Please note that remote learning work via Class Charts will be set for all Year 8 students in every lesson tomorrow (Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January) when they are not in school. Once a year group comes into school for their Lateral Flow Test they will remain in school for that day and the rest of the week. Any students who do not wish to participate in the testing should only come in on the day when their year group is scheduled to return. Students scheduled for testing tomorrow and Thursday may return their consent forms for a test when they return to school if they have not already done so.

As you are aware there were some important changes to the Department for Education advice on COVID published at the end of the Christmas holidays:

- **Masks - DfE masks update:** These should be worn in all internal parts of the school building, including classrooms as per DfE guidance: 'From today, Sunday 2 January, it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term and builds on the existing proportionate guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings. We are updating our guidance to reflect this. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed'
- **DfE/Government self-isolation update:** 'Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason. Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart'

All students should wear face masks unless exempt, limited supplies of face masks are available at school but students should continue to bring and wear their own masks. In addition, many of the precautions in place before the Christmas holidays remain operational:

- Hand sanitizer units are available all around the school.
- Ventilation: Windows will be only be open sufficiently to allow for ventilation in classrooms but the overall heating in the room will not be affected. Coats do not need to be worn and should not be worn inside the building, including classrooms.
- Meetings with parents, carers and other professionals from outside the school are still going ahead, but are restricted only to those that are necessary and they will take place in large, ventilated meeting rooms. At times, this may mean that meeting times are subject to delays
- CO<sub>2</sub> monitors: These have been placed in any rooms with no exterior ventilation and air flow will be monitored. Should it be necessary, an application will be made to the DfE for air filtration systems, but please note that these are not yet being distributed automatically to schools.
- Testing kits will be distributed to students after the initial week of 'on-site' testing. Families who may be short of test kits are also welcome to come to the main reception and collect a kit at any time during the school day.
- Intervention for Year 11 will take place on Wednesday and Thursday as normal this week
- Wednesday and Thursday co-curricular clubs for Years 7 – 10 will re-commence next week (w/c Mon 10.01.22)

As always, we will continue to update parents and carers as soon as we are aware of any further changes. The health and well being of all students, staff, parents and carers remains our priority.

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Searles  
Assistant Head Teacher