



Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to take a further opportunity to update you on the current COVID 19 restrictions and regulations currently in place in school and give you some important information about home and school COVID testing over the Christmas holiday period and when students return in January.

As you will appreciate from the media, the situation remains a very fluid one and any information is subject to amendments and changes at short notice. As always, we review all the systems that we have in place in school and make changes as soon as we have new information from the Department for Education (DfE), Gateshead Public Health Authority or the Consilium Trust.

**The COVID regulations that we have in place continue to address the risks posed to students, staff and visitors to school. Our current measures are summarised below:**

1. Masks must be worn by students and staff in ALL communal areas – i.e. anywhere and at any time outside the classroom
2. Masks should be brought into school by students, where there are genuine cases of students losing or forgetting their masks, they will be given a replacement.
3. Visitors may still come into school for essential meetings, but where meetings can take place in other ways (e.g., by phone) this is being done.
4. Staff and students may choose to wear masks in classrooms if they wish
5. There will be no assemblies until further notice
6. Mixed year group activities that take place in classrooms or outside (specifically co-curricular type activities) can still take place, but all students are asked to wear masks
7. Meetings that do go ahead in school will be in rooms large enough to allow for social distancing and we would ask visitors to wear masks at all times.
8. CO<sub>2</sub> monitors have been placed in any rooms without natural ventilation
9. Whole staff meetings are being kept to a minimum
10. Regrettably the school Christmas concert will not go ahead as a live event but will be recorded and transmitted this way.
11. COVID routines around hygiene and hand sanitising and ventilation in classrooms have remained in place throughout and these have not changed.
12. COVID testing is not provided by the school, although we will provide new test kits. Testing should be done twice weekly at home for all students who have chosen to participate, with the results reported to the NHS via the app.



## Government guidelines and expectations for the Christmas holidays and the return to school in January:

1. Testing kits will be given out in school to all students who wish to take them for the Christmas holiday period. Test kits will be given out during the final week of term
2. At home testing does not have to be done twice weekly over the Christmas holidays
3. Students should take one LFT (Lateral Flow Test) 3 – 4 days before they return to school in January
4. Students who have consented to an on-site test will be given one supervised LFT when they return to school (see times below). To give consent for an on-site test please fill out this online form: <https://forms.office.com/r/KSXKks2YbC> - if you cannot access this form students should ask their advisors for a hard copy, to be filled out and returned to reception.
5. Students should then take another Lateral Flow Test at home 3 – 4 days after their onsite test
6. Home testing should then continue in line with current Government guidelines
7. There will be a staggered return in January, in accordance with DfE guidelines to allow for on site testing:
  - Year 9 return date: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 8.35 AM – Home test should be carried out on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December or Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> January
  - Year 11 return date: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 12.50 PM – Home test should be carried out on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December or Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> January (N.B this is after lunch, any students who would normally have a free school meal should contact the school before the end of term to arrange a time to have their lunch)
  - Year 7 return date: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 8.35 AM – Home test should be carried out on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> or Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January
  - Year 10 return date: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 12.20 PM – Home test should be carried out on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> or Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January (N.B. normal lunchtime for all Year 10)
  - Year 8 return date: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 8.35 AM – Home test should be carried out on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> or Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January
8. 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.
9. Consent forms must be completed by parents/carers wishing their child to have an on-site test – these will be made available online by the end of this week. Hard copies will be available for students to take home if parents/carers cannot access the online form.
10. Any student who tests positive having taken a lateral flow test at home or in school must self-isolate until they have taken a PCR test – see details attached.

Please remain assured that the safety and wellbeing of our students will always remain our highest priority.

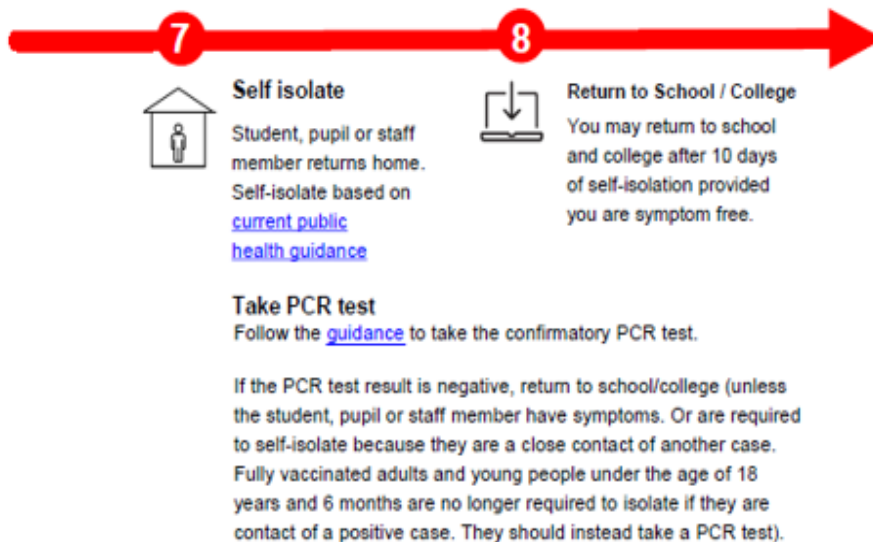
Yours sincerely,

Martyn Searles  
Assistant Head Teacher



## The testing journey: positive result

For individuals who have returned a positive LFD test, schools and colleges should follow the following steps:



If, at any point, a student, pupil or staff member begins displaying symptoms they must follow [government guidelines](#).