



03 January 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

RETURN TO SCHOOL – JANUARY 2022

Happy New Year! I hope you had a restful and happy Christmas break.

We are looking forward to welcoming students back later this week and I am writing to remind you of our arrangements and to update you with the latest Government guidance issued to schools yesterday, Sunday 2 January.

Government Guidance

This latest announcement from the Government does not alter our plans for a staggered return to school to facilitate on-site asymptomatic testing through Lateral Flow Tests, but there are some important changes of which you need to be aware.

Face coverings - From 2 January, the Government is strongly advising all children and staff to wear a face covering in classrooms (unless exempt), as well as in indoor communal areas and corridors. This is a temporary change to the pre-Christmas guidance and will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire. At this point it will be reviewed. As a school we support this guidance and request that students (unless exempt) wear masks whilst they are indoors; we have a stock of disposable masks to support students should they require one.

Self-isolation period - From Wednesday 22 December, the 10 days 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. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to college from day 8.

Close contacts - People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for 7 days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Impact of the guidance on South Dartmoor and the Atrium

- All students are strongly encouraged to attend their LFT appointment (made before Christmas) on Tuesday (Years 10, 11, 12 and 13) or on Wednesday (Years 7, 8 and 9), even if they have tested positive for Covid within the last 90 days (as long as they have completed their isolation period).
- Face coverings will be worn by staff and students in classrooms, as well as inside communal areas and corridors. This will be reviewed at the next Government evaluation point, on the 26 January, at which point we will be in touch again. This, along with all changes, will be reflected in our Risk Assessment which is available on our website.
- Identified close contacts of a positive case can continue to attend school as long as daily LFTs at home remain negative and the person has no symptoms. NHS track and trace teams will continue to identify and communicate with close contacts.
- Staff and students who are positive for Covid may end their isolation earlier than the anticipated 10 days and return to school from day 8, but only if they receive two negative test results on day 6 and day 7.

Cont/d ...

- As an extra precaution, only essential business visitors/contractors will be allowed on-site until 26 January. There will be no on-site meetings with parents or carers until this review point. The only exception would be visits from children's services professionals. I would ask for your support in avoiding dropping off packed lunches, PE kits etc and instead phoning Reception on 01364 652230 so that alternative arrangements can be made for your child. Should you need to collect your child for a medical appointment or because they are unwell, may I remind you to wear a face covering and sanitise upon entry to Reception. Where essential visits are allowed, parents, carers and other visitors are asked to take an LFT at home before entering the setting and only attend if it returns a negative result.
- Extra-curricular and enrichment/trips can continue as planned.
- Vocational exams in January will continue as planned.
- Families and staff should continue to test twice weekly and upload results to the NHS Test and Trace service. School will continue to distribute LFT kits until advised otherwise by the Government.

A reminder of the return to school arrangements: (unchanged since being shared with parents/carers in December).

Year group	Test 1	Remote learning	Return date
Year 7	Wednesday 5 January	Tuesday 4 January	Thursday 6 January
Year 8	Wednesday 5 January	Tuesday 4 January	Thursday 6 January
Year 9	Wednesday 5 January	Tuesday 4 January	Thursday 6 January
Year 10	Tuesday 4 January	Independent learning around Covid test appointment	Wednesday 5 January
Year 11	Tuesday 4 January		Wednesday 5 January
Year 12	Tuesday 4 January		Wednesday 5 January
Year 13	Tuesday 4 January		Wednesday 5 January

Students who are coming into school for testing will be set independent learning for them to complete during the day around their visit to school for their test. Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not in school on the first day back, and nor are they being tested. They will be expected to attend remote teaching (as they did in lockdown) and teachers will deliver the first 15 minutes of lessons and then be on-line to answer questions and support the learning.

NHS information

We would encourage any student who was unable to have their first vaccination last term to access an appointment via the National Booking System. Please use the link below.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

Information about COVID-19 vaccines is available at:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine.

As always, we are grateful for your support. If you have any questions, please contact your child's tutor in the first instance.

Best Wishes



Mrs J Veal
Executive Head teacher

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