



7 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update on Start of term, COVID-19 procedures and Year 9 Option Process

I am writing to update on the start of the spring term in response to the announcements made by the Prime Minister and recent guidance given to schools and academies on mass testing at the start of term.

Start of term and mass testing

During Tuesday 4 January 2022 and Wednesday 5 January 2022, we completed the LFD testing in accordance with Government guidelines:

Year 7 -	155 - all negative
Year 8 -	147 - all negative
Year 9 -	136 - all negative
Year 10 -	148 - one positive
Year 11 -	112 - one positive

My thanks to everyone involved, especially the testing team who ensured our children were made to feel safe and supported through the process. My thanks too to all our children who gave consent to be tested, they were extremely well behaved and "just got on with it". Throughout each day, pupils and students returned to usual lessons so by Thursday we resumed full delivery of our school timetable.

Self-testing

We continue to distribute LFD test kits to pupils in all year groups to support the twice-weekly testing programme. Recently, the Government changed their guidance on when someone should resume self-testing after having COVID-19. Previously if you had COVID-19 you had to wait ninety days before resuming self-testing. Since January 2022 this changed to completing an LFD test on day six and day seven after a positive PCR result, and if these tests are negative then you can resume usual activities; if positive then the ten-day period must be completed. The following is an extract from the Gov.UK website which although not made explicit, relates to people who are vaccinated:

"People who receive negative LFD results on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period – with tests taken 24 hours apart – will no longer have to self-isolate for the full 10 days. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period.

Those who leave self-isolation on or after day 7 are strongly advised to limit close contact with other people in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces, work from home and minimise contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID- 19.

There is no change to the guidance for unvaccinated contacts of positive COVID-19 cases, who are still required to self-isolate for 10 full days after their date of exposure to the virus.

Analysis by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) suggests that a 7-day isolation period alongside 2 negative lateral flow test results has nearly the same protective effect as a 10-day isolation period without LFD testing for people with COVID-19."

As you will be aware, this guidance may be subject to change.

Face coverings

Face coverings are being worn by most children both in communal areas and in classrooms. Those children who are exempt have an exemption card which can be carried in their card case on their lanyard. I wish to encourage as many children as possible to purchase their own face mask rather than rely on disposable face mask supplies from school.

Assemblies and Year 9 Options Evening

As I wrote in my letter of 14 December 2021, due to the potential for the spread of COVID-19 we have suspended assemblies and large gatherings from the start of the spring term, but they continue online. Also, we are moving our Year 9 Options Evening to online presentations; apologies for any inconvenience but the application process will continue as usual with all information updated on our website.

Year 9 Options 2022

This year, the process for our Year 9 pupils to select their GCSE and Vocational options, which they will start in September 2022, has been amended to consider we are not able to have a Year 9 Options Evening in school. I understand there was a logistical problem with the Year 9 Parents/Carers evening last night which resulted in notifications of absent members of staff not being communicated – I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

Next week, pupils in Year 9 will have the options process explained to them through presentations as part of the Lifetracks process. which will also be available to view on our school website. Alongside this, we will also publish the KS4 Options Booklet. This provides information about the options process and details of all subjects which are available to study through Years 10 and 11. It also has the email addresses of specialist subject teachers who can be contacted to answer any subject specific questions.

The presentation for Options will be published online by Wednesday 19 January 2022 – this will be a pre-recorded Microsoft PowerPoint presentation to explain the process and points to consider. In addition, there will be access to a range of videos from subject areas giving more information and covering the types of questions that specialist subject teachers have been asked in previous years.

January Programme of information, advice and guidance for pupils in and Lifetracks lessons including a pupil presentation explaining the process. Options advice available Wednesday and Thursday form time in Ma01.

6th January Year 9 Parents Evening – Subject consultations.

19th January Options Presentation and video goes live on the website.

20th/21st February Option Forms sent home via ParentMail

11th February Latest Year 9 report data sent home

16th February Deadline for returning Option Forms via ParentMail

As always, I wish to end by thanking you for your continued support and to say that I am proud of our children and the way they have returned to school following the Christmas break and I trust they will continue to focus on their learning and achieving their best.

Yours sincerely



Ian Morrel

Headteacher