

16 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: January re-opening and Lateral Flow Testing

As we near the end of term, I am writing to update you on the latest Government guidance and how this will impact our re-opening in January.

Staggered Start

As you are aware, the Department for Education has announced that all students need to be offered a Lateral Flow Test at the start of the new term and this means that the return to school will need to be staggered for some students.

So that we can do this as efficiently as possible, and to ensure that exam groups do not miss any lessons, arrangements in our school will be as follows:

Tuesday 4 January

- Closed to all year groups for the planned training day published in our school calendar.
- We will offer onsite Lateral Flow Testing for those students in **Year 11 and Year 13** who have **provided consent** (see link below for details and how to book an appointment)

Wednesday 5 January

- Return to lessons for Years 11 and Year 13 only
- We will offer onsite Lateral Flow Testing for those students in **Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12** who have **provided consent** (see link below for details and how to book an appointment)

Thursday 6 January

- All students return to school

Lateral Flow Testing

For those who would like to book an appointment for their child to receive a lateral flow test in school at times highlighted above, please click on the following link: <http://www.parents-booking.co.uk/driffieldschool>. The booking system is now live and will close on Monday 3 January 2022.

It is essential that, prior to the test, you have completed a new consent form for your child for this new round of lateral flow testing. If you have not done so already, please access this link <https://forms.office.com/r/4gh645QsQV> no later than Monday 3 January 2022. If the consent form is not completed by this date, we will not be able to carry out a lateral flow test for your child.

Students should arrive via the main school entrance on Manorfield Road a few minutes before their allotted appointment time and make their way to the Sports Hall, following the onsite signage. If you are bringing your child to school for the test, please park in the visitor's car park and remain in your

car whilst your child attends their test appointment. Students are required to wear face coverings inside the Sports Hall testing area.

The testing process takes approximately five minutes; once this is complete, your child will leave the testing site through the marked exit and is then free to leave the school site. Test results take approximately 30 minutes and students will be informed of their result via the email or mobile number that has been used to register their test on the NHS website.

If your child receives a negative test result, they will be able to return to school on their calendared start day: Wednesday 5 January 2022 for Year 11 & 13 students, and Thursday 6 January 2022 for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12.

If your child receives a positive test result, they should:

- self-isolate straight away
- get a PCR test (a test that is sent to a lab) to confirm their result as soon as possible

They should then continue to self-isolate until they get the result of the PCR test and then follow the advice given when they get the result. During this time, they will be able to access their learning through Microsoft Teams if they feel well enough. Full guidance is available on the NHS website at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/test-results/positive-test-result/>

If you have any questions or concerns about the testing process, or are struggling to make a suitable appointment, please do hesitate to contact us via our office email: office@driffieldschool.org.uk.

Further guidance from the Government

The Department for Education advice is that students continue with twice weekly home testing during the holiday period. Students have been supplied with sufficient home test kits to do this and we ask for your continued support with this.

In addition, new guidance (below) now states the following for those who have been identified as close contacts of people with COVID-19:

From Tuesday 14 December, people who are fully vaccinated and identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take an NHS rapid lateral flow test every day for 7 days to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

Daily rapid testing applies to all contacts who are:

- *fully vaccinated adults – people who have had 2 jabs*
- *all children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccination status*
- *people who can prove they are unable to be vaccinated for clinical reasons*
- *people taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine*

Under 5s are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.

As now, anyone whose rapid test comes back positive or who develops COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and take a confirmatory PCR test to verify the result. If the PCR result comes back positive, contacts must self-isolate for 10 days from the day they took the positive rapid test or developed symptoms. They do not need to continue taking rapid tests during that 10 day isolation period. If the PCR result comes back negative, contacts can leave self-isolation but should continue to take rapid tests for the remainder of the 7 days.

Anyone identified as a contact with a negative rapid lateral flow result is strongly advised to limit close contact with other people outside their household, especially in crowded or enclosed spaces and with anyone who is more vulnerable. They should also follow government guidance on wearing a face covering and working from home where possible.

Unvaccinated adults are not eligible for this new daily testing policy, they must self-isolate for 10 days if they are a contact of someone who tests positive for COVID-19 – Omicron or not – unless eligible for an existing workplace daily contact testing.

The link to the full announcement is here: [Daily Rapid Testing for Close Contacts from 14th December 2022](#)

Best Wishes

As we finish a challenging but ultimately rewarding term, I would like to thank all the staff for giving so freely of their own time to ensure that things have returned to (near) normal where possible. We have been delighted to see the return of lots of extra-curricular activities, where we have had over 100 students on any one night taking part in a range of clubs, additional lessons and sports fixtures.

I would also like to thank our students for adapting to the changing routines and engaging so positively in their lessons. It remains a real privilege to see them enjoying their lessons and engaging in these extra opportunities.

Finally, thank you for your ongoing support across the whole of 2021. I wish you and your families a safe and merry Christmas and a much better 2022.

Yours faithfully,



Scott RATHERAM
Executive Principal