

3 January 2022

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Principal: Ms Siobhan Hearne

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Covid-19 Updates: Current Guidance and January Assisted Testing**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS HAS BEEN UPDATED TO REFLECT THE LATEST GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE IN RELATION TO THE WEARING OF FACE MASKS IN CLASSROOMS, WHICH IS NOW RECOMMENDED ONCE AGAIN AND TO THE SELF-ISOLATION RULES.**

Firstly, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. We are determined to do all that we can to ensure that our students continue to receive the education that they deserve and our sincere hope is that over the coming months, our communication to you is not dominated by Covid-19 information!

But for now there are some important updates and reminders that we need to give and once again we thank you for your patience and understanding as we have continued to navigate our way through the pandemic.

Unfortunately, with the dramatic increase in infection rates over the Christmas break linked to the Omicron variant, there is a timely reminder to us all that we are not there yet! Rest assured, our number one priority remains to ensure the safety and well-being of all of those in our community but we all have to play our part in this. With this in mind, and following further changes to government guidance, I thought that it would be helpful to take this opportunity to clarify what the current position is and to outline the plans for the start of Term 3, when students return this week.

### **Preventative Measures and Controls**

The table below sets out the controls that remain in place or have been reinstated or adjusted following recent changes. These are reflected in our Risk Assessment, which can be accessed on our website.

<b>What will continue</b>	<b>What has changed</b>
Students and staff should not come into school if they have any symptoms of COVID-19.	<b>Face masks will be reintroduced in classrooms</b> , as well as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.
Any student or member of staff displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home.	Face masks are mandatory on school and public transport.
Students and staff will need to self-isolate if they test positive for COVID-19.	NHS Test and Trace will contact those identified as a close contact of anyone testing positive and they will need to self-isolate for 7 days (if they take a LFD test on days 6 and 7 and these are negative.)
NHS Test and Trace will contact those identified as a close contact and they will be advised to take a PCR test.	
Twice weekly testing at home using Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Tests on a Monday and Thursday.	
The implementation of routine preventative measures: regular hand sanitising, ventilation, Catch It. Bin It. Kill It. and routine cleaning of touch points throughout the day.	

## PCR Testing and Isolation Clarification

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.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation.

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 seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

We urge every student to continue with the twice weekly LFD testing. We will continue to issue kits regularly.

## January Assisted COVID-19 Testing

We want to ensure that we do all that we can to make staff, students and their parents and carers reassured about the return to school this week. As part of this, as families will have been mixing over the Christmas period, the government have asked us to carry out one assisted lateral flow device test at the start of Term 3.

Following this test, we will issue students with Lateral Flow Device (LFD) home testing kits so that they can test twice per week for at least the rest of the term, following which the government will review this programme.

***Please note that the guidance has changed and even if students have had Covid-19 in the last 90 days, they should still take part in the Assisted Testing programme.***

We will assume that all students who were originally registered for this programme in September will undertake the assisted test, unless you contact us to inform us that this position has changed.

If your child was not originally registered for assisted testing, please contact Jackie Love, Student Services Manager by email at [jlove@latimer.org.uk](mailto:jlove@latimer.org.uk) so that they can be added to the schedule should you wish them to take part.

## January Assisted Testing Arrangements

In order to manage the assisted testing process, we will have to schedule a staggered return to school for all year groups. However, we are keeping this staggered start to as short a time as possible and all students will be back in school by lunchtime on Thursday 6 January.

The overview of the schedule for return is detailed below. A personalised text message has been sent to each parent and carer with a specific time slot for their child/ren to return. Once the result of the test is confirmed, your child will return to their normal timetabled lessons. All students will be issued with a time slot for them to arrive in College, regardless of whether they are participating in the testing programme. Every student should report to the Sports Hall on their arrival so that we can complete a registration process.

<b>Wednesday 5 January 2022: Week 2</b>	
Sixth Form	Return from 8.15am for testing, with times schedule across the morning to take into account Home Study periods. Timetabled lessons and scheduled exams will resume from Lesson 1 onwards. Students will be able to access our break and lunchtime catering provision.
Year 11	Lesson 1: Return on a staggered basis from 8.30am for testing. Timetabled lessons resume from Lesson 2 onwards. Students will be able to access our break and lunchtime catering provision.
Year 10	Lesson 2: Return on a staggered basis from 9.30am for testing. Timetabled lessons resume from Lesson 3 onwards. Students will be able to access our break and lunchtime catering provision.
Year 9	Lesson 3: Return on a staggered basis from 10.50am for testing. Timetabled lessons resume from tutor time onwards. Students will be able to access our lunchtime catering provision.
Year 8	Not in attendance
Year 7	Not in attendance
<b>Thursday 6 January 2022: Week 2</b>	
Sixth Form Years 9,10 and 11	Return at 8.30am and attend all timetabled lessons or scheduled exams as normal.
Year 7	Lesson 1: Return on a staggered basis from 8.30am for testing. Timetabled lessons resume from Lesson 2 onwards. Students will be able to access our break and lunchtime catering provision.
Year 8	Lesson 2: Return on a staggered basis from 9.30am for testing. Timetabled lessons resume from Lesson 3 onwards. Students will be able to access our break and lunchtime catering provision.

We do hope that this information that we have provided now will help you and your child to prepare for the start of Term 3 and we look forward to welcoming them back this week.

Yours sincerely

*Ms. S. Hearne*

**Ms S Hearne**  
**Principal**