

10 December 2021

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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 COMMUNICATION IS SENT BASED ON THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE. AS THIS IS A FAST MOVING SITUATION ONCE AGAIN, SHOULD THERE BE ANY CHANGES WE WILL UPDATE YOU ACCORDINGLY.**

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your unwavering support over the course of this term. As a parent and carer body you have once again been patient and understanding as we have continued to navigate our way through the pandemic. Our staff body truly appreciate this.

Unfortunately, with the emergence of the Omicron variant over the last week, 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 in January.

**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.  Any student or member of staff displaying symptoms of COVID-19 will be sent home.  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 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.	Face masks have been re-introduced in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.  Face masks are mandatory on school and public transport.  NHS Test and Trace will contact those identified as a close contact of anyone testing positive for the Omicron variant and they will need to self-isolate for 10 days.

## PCR Testing and Isolation Clarification

We are currently following the North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) guidance in relation to the advice on PCR testing.

There is no need for a child to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for any variant of Covid-19, apart from if this is the Omicron variant and NHS Track and Trace will notify you of this.

For all other variants, if a child is identified by Track and Trace as being a close contact, a PCR test will be recommended as a precaution.

However, should a sibling or parent/carer test positive, NNC are asking that all family members should take a precautionary PCR test and self-isolate until a negative result is confirmed. If negative, the siblings can return to school and are then asked to take a LFD test each day for the next 10 days to ensure no transmission into other school years occurs. Should this be the case, the College can supply additional LFD tests on request.

We urge every student to continue with the twice weekly LFD testing and the government have stated that they would like this to continue over Christmas. We will be issuing kits in preparation for this.

## 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 in January. As part of this, as families will be 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.

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.

***Please note that any student who has tested positive 90 days before Wednesday 5 January 2022 should not take part in the assisted testing. They can inform us of this on their testing day.***

## 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. We will send a personalised text before the end of this term 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 return in January. In the meantime, we hope that you and your family enjoy a safe, peaceful and restful Christmas, once the festivities begin.

Yours sincerely

*Ms. S. Hearne*

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