

15 July 2021

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Principal: Ms Siobhan Hearne

Dear Parents and Carers

**New Academic Year: September 2021 Start of the Year Schedule**

We are very much looking forward to your child joining us in September. Rest assured, our number one priority will be to ensure that we bring our students and staff back safely, in a controlled and measured way, fulfilling the latest government guidance, so that we can provide a purposeful start to their life at Latimer.

This letter provides an overview of what the plans will be. Given the relatively late guidance that the government has published, whilst we are able to outline some of the plans for September, we ask for your patience a little longer whilst we put the final detail to some. A full update will be sent out prior to the end of the summer break.

**Preventative Measures and Controls**

The table below sets out the controls that will remain in place and those that will be removed in September. However, we would like to make you aware that the guidance states that if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in a school or the local community, additional preventative measures may be re-introduced, including students being re-organised back into 'bubbles' and face masks being re-instated.

In order to do all that we can to prevent this, we will continue to have a live Risk Assessment, which can be accessed through our website and which will be regularly reviewed.

<b><u>What <i>will not</i> continue</u></b>	<b><u>What <i>will</i> continue</u></b>
Students and staff will not be required to self-isolate if they have been in close contact with another student who has tested positive for COVID-19.  The College will no longer be responsible for contact tracing.  NHS Test and Trace will contact those identified as a close contact and they will be advised to take a PCR test.	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.
Students and staff will not be required to wear face masks, although we respect the wishes of anyone who does want to wear a mask for some or all of the time.  Students will not be required to wear face masks on school or public transport.	We will continue to encourage regular hand sanitising and all classrooms, eating areas and other communal areas will have hand sanitising stations.

	Our daytime cleaner will continue to wipe down touch points across the College throughout the day and communal areas such as IT rooms, changing rooms and areas where there is shared equipment will continue to be routinely cleaned.
	We will continue to open windows and external doors on a regular basis to ensure a fresh air flow.
Students will not be organised into year group 'bubbles' for lessons.  Students will have full access to all specialist rooms.	Students will have split lunches, with 3 year groups on each lunchtime, although these year groups will have shared access to specified locations at break and lunchtime and year groups will not be kept separate.

### Key Information for Students and Parents and Carers

In order to ensure that you are familiar with our key policies and procedures, included with this letter is our Information for Parents and Carers Booklet. This has been updated from the first version that we issued you with as part of the Moving Up process. We do ask that you take the time to read this to ensure that your child is ready for a smooth start to the academic year.

We would particularly like to draw your attention to our Ready to Learn requirements in relation to attendance, behaviour, uniform and equipment.

### Assisted COVID-19 Testing and Twice Weekly Testing

Up to one third of people who have coronavirus are asymptomatic, which means that because they do not show any of the COVID-19 symptoms, they are probably unaware that they have the virus. Therefore, they may be spreading it without realising.

By testing, we will help to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in school settings through asymptomatic transmission and in turn help to minimise any community outbreaks. We would therefore strongly encourage our new Year 7 students to undertake a testing programme during September.

**How do Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests work?** The LFD tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and/or the throat. Results are then produced in around half an hour from testing.

**What will the onsite assisted testing process look like?** On their return to school in September, students are being offered two supervised LFD tests, carried out on the College site under the supervision of trained adults and volunteers. This is known as ATS, assisted test site testing. Each of these tests will be 3-5 days apart.

A student's first test time will be confirmed once the College has finalised the schedule. Once the student's test has been processed, the College will notify the student and their parents and carers if the result is positive. The student will also receive a text/email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

Students would then have their second LFD test week commencing Monday 6 September, coming out of a lesson in order to undertake their test.

The purpose of offering students onsite assisted testing initially is, firstly, to identify any student who may be asymptomatic as the College re-opens in order to prevent them from unknowingly spreading the virus. In addition to this, it is to 'train' students in how to administer the tests so that, following their second onsite assisted test, they can then be issued with home testing kits.

**How will home testing work?** Following their second test in College, students will be issued with a pack of LFD home testing kits. Testing should then be undertaken twice per week at home, ideally in the morning on a Monday and Thursday. Students can self-swab, apart from those who are under 11 years old, where it is recommended that an adult carries out the swabbing.

The full testing process will take around 30 minutes to undertake but the swabbing itself can be undertaken in a few minutes.

A simple, step by step video on how to administer a home test can also be viewed on YouTube [here](#).

Every time your child uses a lateral flow test at home the results must be reported to the NHS. More details can be found here: [Report a COVID-19 test result](#). The results will also have to be reported to the College and more details will follow on how to do this.

**What if my child tests positive?** If a student tests positive using a LFD, they will need to self-isolate and book a confirmatory PCR test. If this test is positive, then they will need to self-isolate for 10 days (or in line with the latest government guidance). If the PCR test is negative, your child can return to school immediately.

**What if a student has been in close contact with someone in the College who tests positive?** There will no longer be a requirement for a student to self-isolate unless they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test.

**What if my child develops COVID-19 symptoms?** This testing programme is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (including a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate and book a PCR test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

#### **What are the next steps?**

In order for us to offer onsite assisted LFD tests, **we must have a completed consent form**. This can be accessed by clicking this [link](#).

We also include a privacy notice for both the onsite assisted testing and the home testing.

Please note that any student who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days should not take a test at this time. We will liaise directly with those who indicate that they fall into this category to confirm when their testing process should commence.

As we have significant planning to do, it is important that we gain some understanding of how many tests we have to administer. Therefore, we ask that the consent form is completed by **9am on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August** at the latest.

We ask that you complete the consent form, even if you do not wish to give consent (for which there is a box on the form to indicate this). In this way, we will not have to keep chasing you for a reply!

***Testing is voluntary, but we do urge parents and carers to allow their child to engage with this process, which, once the students have been trained, is quick and easy to administer.***

## Start of the Year Arrangements

In order to manage the assisted testing process, we will be scheduling a staggered return to school for all year groups. Year 7 **will not** attend school on Thursday 2 September.

On Friday 3 September, each Year 7 form will be invited into school, at 15 minute intervals, in order for them to undertake their first assisted test. We will send details of a start time for your child in the week commencing Monday 16 August.

Following their assisted test, your child will remain in school until the end of the school day, which on Friday 3 September will be between 2:00 and 2.45pm (not the normal time of 3.00pm), depending upon the start time. This will be communicated to you at the same time as the test time is confirmed. Across the day, they will undertake a series of induction activities that will include a tour of the school, some PE activities and some academic assessments.

Please rest assured that your child does not need to prepare for these academic assessments. These are simply designed to give us a benchmark so that we can most effectively plan our teaching moving forwards.

Students should wear full school uniform and bring all of their equipment and their trainers for this induction day. PE kit is not required.

Those students who do not participate in the testing programme will return to school at the same time as the rest of their form group and will be supervised whilst the other students undertake their assisted test.

Students will be able to purchase food and drink from a lunchtime food service in Picassos, our dining facility, including those entitled to free school meals. Please see our Information for Parents and Carers Booklet for details of how to upload money to your child's account.

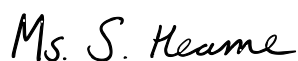
From Monday 6 September, all students will be in full attendance from 8.30am – 3.00pm.

We do hope that this information that we have provided now will help you and your child to prepare for the new academic year. We will communicate with you again week commencing Monday 16 August with the specific time slots for your child/ren. This communication will include any updates or changes, should the government guidance change.

In the meantime, we hope that you and your family enjoy a restful summer break.

We very much look forward to meeting you all in September.

Yours sincerely



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