

3 January 2020

School re-opening in January 2021

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students

Dear Parent or Guardian

I hope that you and your family had an enjoyable Christmas, notwithstanding the COVID-19 restrictions that we are all living with.

As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic in March to keep our school as safe as possible, and that work has continued over the Christmas holiday period. I would like to thank our incredible staff for their commitment and professionalism, which has seen many working over the holidays.

My letter today includes important information relating to when your child will return to school at the start of this coming term, and relating to the COVID-19 testing process for staff and students.

Information relating to school re-opening in January 2021

The Government has now announced that secondary schools and colleges will re-open on a phased basis, as follows:

- If your child is classed as vulnerable or if you or your partner is a key worker, then your child can return to school on Tuesday 5th January.
- If your child is in Year 11, then your child will return to school on Monday 11th January. Your child is expected to engage fully with their remote learning during the week of 5th January so that they keep up with their education
- If your child is in Years 7, 8, 9 or 10, then your child will return to school on Monday 18th January. Your child is expected to engage fully with their remote learning during the weeks of both 5th and 11th January so that they keep up with their education
- If your child is due to sit external exams from week commencing 5th January, these will continue as planned. We will confirm arrangements with students and families shortly.

As before, a great deal of planning and risk assessment has gone into ensuring that our school continues to be as safe as possible for students and staff, in line with latest Government and Public Health England guidance.

We will continue to take decisions in the best interests of our students, working with you and keeping you informed every step of the way, while following Government rules and advice.

Information relating to NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students

You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests can help staff and students remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary. However, we are participating as a school and I would encourage all students and staff to take part as well.

We will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from week commencing 4th January 2021, extending this as more students return in following weeks.

I enclose an instructional leaflet with some more information (below) as well as a consent form (attached).

If you are happy for your child to be tested, please:

- Fill in the form (click on link)
- Complete the enclosed consent statement (one per student) and return it and the completed form below to the school office at enquiries@brumby.outwood.com

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under-18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results take around half an hour from testing and will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under-16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

The Government has shared information with us from Oxford University and Public Health England, which have indicated the tests are as accurate in identifying a case as a 'PCR test' (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but are considered better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently. Testing will be offered free of charge.

I hope that the information in this letter is helpful and clear. Please do ensure you complete the form below and the consent form attached, if you are happy for your child to take a COVID-19 test, by January 11th. If you have any questions, please do also email these to enquiries@brumby.outwood.com.

In the meantime, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very happy New Year. Please do continue to take care and stay safe.

Yours faithfully

Angela Hull

Angela Hull
Principal