

24th August 2021

Dear Year 9 Parents/Carers and Pupils (from September 2021)

We hope that you are all well.

Information on testing in the autumn term in secondary schools

Given the current uncertainties around the Covid-19 situation, the Government wants to help schools to be prepared for all scenarios when term starts after the summer holidays. This means that secondary schools have to set up Asymptomatic Test Sites (ATS) on site from the start of the autumn term and, therefore, have a staggered start to term, as was the case when we returned to school-based learning after the lockdown in March.

Pupils will be offered two Lateral Flow tests on the school site, spaced 3-4 days apart, at the start of the autumn term. This will help to identify cases of COVID-19 and stop transmission to support the return to school – particularly as most pupils will not be testing over the summer and will need to re-establish the habit of regular twice weekly testing. Pupils will be able to return to face-to-face teaching as long as their first test is negative.

For Year 9 in September, **the first test will take place during the afternoon of Friday 3rd September** and our expectation is that all pupils will take the test. **Normal face to face lessons will then begin again for Year 9 from 8.35 am on Monday 6th September.**

Please note:

- Pupils will not come to school until their first test is scheduled – please note the arrangements below.

Testing arrangements on Friday 3rd September:

Pupils are invited into school by Tutor Group according to the timetable below. It is extremely important that they are on time as we have to take a lot of tests in a limited time.

Arrival Time	Tutor Groups
1.30pm	Adam and Banks
1.50pm	Dickens and Gresham
2.10pm	Hogarth and Jenner
2.30pm	Kent and Palmer
2.50pm	Sheridan and Turner

Pupils will line up on the yellow courtyard, wearing masks at all times and maintaining social distancing.

Pupils will be asked to come into the Main Hall where they will be registered, and then take the test itself.

Once they have taken their test, they leave the school site, continuing to maintain social distancing at all times.

We will only notify you if your test is positive, if not you can assume the result was negative.

The second tests for Year 9 will take place during normal school hours during the week beginning 6th September (pupils will be in school and will be brought down from their lesson).

COVID – 19 contact tracing and isolation

As you know, the Prime Minister announced on 12 July that Step 4 of the roadmap would go ahead on 19 July.

One of the key changes is that schools will no longer be asked to conduct routine contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with either the positive case – or in the case of children – the parents, carers or guardian of the positive case to identify close contacts.

Self-isolating and taking a test

If your child has symptoms, she/he **must self-isolate straight away** and get a PCR test (a test that is sent to the lab) on GOV.UK as soon as possible.

If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow device (LFD) test, your child should self-isolate – and you **should inform the school**. You should immediately order a confirmatory PCR test. If the confirmatory test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons).

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons



Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Students aged under 18 years 6 months who have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal.

As a final note, could I please remind you that students **should not** come into school if they are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms. This testing programme at The Heathland is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as 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 test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Best wishes

Best wishes

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Headmaster

Mr S.S. Gill
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