

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I do hope that you have all been able to enjoy family time and some festive fun over the Christmas period. We are looking forward to the return to school and I am writing to update you on guidance sent to all schools yesterday, on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

As you are aware, all schools have been asked to ensure that secondary school students undertake one on-site test, on return in January. A reminder that our arrangements are as follows:

### **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January LFD Testing Timetable**

#### **Year 7**

9.55am	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall for testing
10.15am	Pupils resume timetabled lessons

#### **Year 8 (X Band)**

12.30pm	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall carpark entrance
12.45pm	Pupils return home

#### **Year 8 (Y Band)**

1.15pm	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall carpark entrance
1.30pm	Pupils return home

#### **Year 9 (X Band)**

2.00pm	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall carpark entrance
2.15pm	Pupils return home

#### **Year 9 (Y Band)**

2.30pm	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall carpark entrance
2.45pm	Pupils return home

#### **Year 10**

11.00am	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall for testing
11.15am	Pupils resume timetabled lessons

#### **Year 11**

8.35am	Pupils arrive and report to the sports hall for testing
8.55am	Pupils resume timetabled lessons

#### **Sixth form**

8.35am	Pupils report to 6th form Centre
8.55am	Pupils resume timetabled lessons

(NB: Pupils in year 8 and year 9 won't return to timetabled lessons until Wednesday 5th January)

**Students are then strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home** and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and positive tests to us [positivetest@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:positivetest@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk). Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing

on-site, or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection. We appreciate that this is a change to previous guidance, please contact the school office if you require further clarification [office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk).

### **Changes to self-isolation period**

You may already be aware that 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. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

### **Daily testing for close contacts**

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.

### **Contingency arrangements**

We recognise that the high rates of COVID-19 may cause difficulties with the availability of our staff and we have plans in place to address this. **Our priority will be to keep school open and to continue with face-to-face education.** If we face staff shortages, we will:

- Redeploy available staff within school to cover classes where the teacher is absent
- Combine classes (as consistent groupings or 'bubbles' is not part of the current guidance)
- Use available staffing from external agencies

We have no plans to move to remote education but it is important that we have plans in place should we need to do this at any point. Should there be a short term need for us to use remote education following advice from the DfE or Public Health officials then our arrangements will be as follows:

- In line with the DfE preference to deliver live streamed lessons where possible
- To set work via Satchel Homework App if live streaming is not possible.

### **Updated guidance on the use of face coverings**

It is now recommended that **face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated.** The advice is short term only and will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed. Thank you for the support we saw at the end of term for the use of face masks in all communal areas, we hope that we will see similar support for this short term use of face masks in classrooms now.

Face masks and ventilation continue to be two of our strongest control measures. We monitor CO2 levels and ensure the school is well ventilated. Staff will continue to ensure that they follow the guidance we have given to them to keep the spaces that they teach in well ventilated.

### **Examinations and assessments in January**

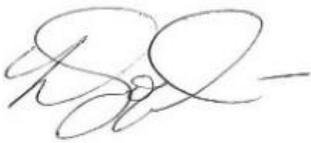
All scheduled examinations and assessments will be going ahead as we originally planned; we will follow guidance issued by the awarding organisations and any students taking examinations will be provided with the details they need.

### **Supporting good attendance**

We have been delighted that so many of our students have sustained good attendance throughout this year so far and we need to continue to focus on enabling this. Please continue to follow our routine procedures for reporting absences [office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk) as quickly as you are able to so that we can focus our resources and available support.

The spring term is always one full of hope and optimism as the days eventually become longer and nature bursts into life again. We have been a very strong community throughout the trials of the pandemic and I feel confident that we can navigate this next phase together, using what we have learnt. Please do communicate with us when you need to and thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Butler', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Mr D Butler  
**Principal**