

18th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to you to provide further information regarding the current developments with regard to coronavirus testing provision for asymptomatic school aged children and their family contacts as well as yesterday's announcement from the DfE about a staggered return to school in January.

Staggered return to school in the Spring Term

The DfE (Department for Education) announced on Thursday its plan to stagger the return of students to school in January. This is to allow schools to plan for mass COVID-19 testing within the educational setting.

The full statement from the Secretary of State can be found [\[here\]](#).

A separate letter outlining the plans for rapid flow testing has been distributed alongside this correspondence.

On Thursday 7th January 2021 only the following students will return to lessons in the school:

- those in Year 11
- those in Year 13
- those who are supported by a social worker
- children looked after (CLA) or previously looked after
- those who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- children of critical workers*

**We will send out a Google form during the week beginning 4th January to all parents and carers outlining categories for critical workers and asking whether or not this provision will be required by individual families.*

All other students will begin the term on the 7th January **but learning will take place remotely at home.**

Students will be required to log on by 8.25am each day, via a computer, laptop, tablet or phone.

Students will be expected to participate in a full five-period day as well as participate in their tutorials.

Our teaching and support staff will all be working on site so other school functions will continue as normal.

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Mr Gary Mullings BA (Hons)
Headteacher

From Monday 11th January 2021 all students will attend school as normal.

Although we are deeply frustrated by the timing of this announcement we are keen to support the process of introducing rapid testing into educational settings. We will, of course, endeavour to keep parents and carers informed of any further developments during the week beginning 4th January. I would also ask parents and carers to keep an eye on their email for further messages over the Christmas break.

Testing for secondary school pupils and their families / household contacts

With rising case rates in London, in-person symptomatic testing channels will accept asymptomatic residents who wish to get tested.

Based on the current picture, this additional testing is focused on secondary school aged children and young people, and their families / household contacts. Currently, this testing will be available up to and beyond the end of term. We will let you know if this changes.

How to book a test

Go to: Get a test [\[click here\]](#)

Select the following answers:

Is the person an essential worker? **No**

Does the person have symptoms? **No**

Is the person part of a pilot project? **No**

Why are you asking for a test? **My local council has asked me to get a test and booking is essential**

This will allow you to add personal details and book a test.

Contacting the School if your child tests positive

The nature of the virus means that any individual who tests positive is likely to have been contagious for up to 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms. Unfortunately, if you or your child tests positive and is asymptomatic it may be difficult to establish the time period in which they may have been contagious.

As you will be aware, every school in the UK is required to undertake a track and trace process on each and every occasion that a child (or member of staff) tests positive for coronavirus. As we come to the end of the term I would ask parents and carers to follow the following timeline when deciding whether to contact the school to report a **positive test result**:

- If your child took a test on Thursday 17th December and was in school at any time between Tuesday 15th and Thursday 17th December then please contact the school;
- If your child takes a test on Friday 18th December and was in school at any time between Wednesday 16th December and Friday 18th December then please contact the school;

- If your child takes a test on Saturday 19th December and was present in school on either Thursday 17th or Friday 18th December then please contact the school;
- If your child takes a test on Sunday 20th December and was in school on Friday 18th December then please contact the school;
- If your child experiences symptoms on Sunday 20th December and subsequently tests positive for coronavirus and attended school on Friday 18th December then please contact the school.
- If your child experiences symptoms on or after Monday 21st December but before the start of the spring term then parents do not need to contact the school and should follow advice provided by the NHS track and trace.

Please note that I have referred to the date that the **test was taken** and **not** the date of the result. As a reminder, if you need to report a positive coronavirus test result at any time from Saturday 19th December through to Thursday 24th December they should do so by emailing Mrs Bashford Hynes ehynes@vynersschool.org.uk and Mrs Foster afoster@vynersschool.org.uk. Please ensure that you provide details of when the test was taken and, in the case of symptomatic individuals, when the symptoms first arose. A single email addressed to both members of staff will suffice.

Thank you once again for your continued support. I do hope that all families and friends of the school are able to enjoy a safe and peaceful Christmas holiday.

Yours sincerely



Gary Mullings
Headteacher