



Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

Striving for Excellence

Acting Principal • Mr Rhys Phillips

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3 January 2022

Dear all

I hope you have had a wonderful break and a Happy New Year! As we continue to plan for a safe and secure return to school this week I would like to update all members of our school community on the most recent updates regarding the Covid 19 pandemic.

Yesterday, the Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi, wrote to all education and childcare leaders to provide an update on the return to education and childcare following the holiday period. As you will have seen in the media, the continuation of face-to-face teaching for all children is a national priority and there have been a number of significant changes which will need to be implemented within schools.

Please find below a summary of the updated guidance that was provided to us yesterday, as well as important information on how this affects our return to school this week.

In school Lateral Flow Testing for students after the holiday period

As in all secondary settings, we have been asked to reinstate our Covid 19 testing site so that students can undertake one on-site in school test, on return in January.

As announced by the Government yesterday and unlike in previous rounds of testing, even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in Lateral Flow Device testing on-site.

If you have not previously given the school consent for your child to be included in our testing programme and would like to do so now for January 2022 please use [this electronic form](#).

Due to this recently updated guidance which will involve testing a greater number of students at school, and to further support the reduction in transmission within our school community, we will be testing the following year groups on the days indicated below.

Thursday 6th January 2022 - Yr 7, Yr 8, Yr 11, Yr 12, Yr 13

Friday 7th January 2022 - Yr 9, Yr 10

As such, students in Yr 9 & 10 will not return to school until Friday 7th January 2022.

Online learning will be set for students in Yr 9 & 10, on Thursday 6th January, via MILK.

Although we will be conducting Lateral Flow Testing on the first day students are in school, we would also strongly request that Lateral Flow Tests are conducted the night before your first day of school.

Students will also be strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and via our [online reporting form](#).

Updated guidance on the use of face coverings in education settings

It is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The current advice is short term only, to support students and teachers as they return to school this term. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations

are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed. As such, all students should continue to bring masks to school, as well as wearing them on their bus journeys to and from school. We will have spare masks available within school as a contingency, but I would ask that all students come to school with their own mask and also their own spare mask. Normal medical exemptions will still be in place.

Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

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 school from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19

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 a LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Covid 19 Vaccinations

12-15 year olds are encouraged to get fully vaccinated (two doses), to ensure they are protected. 16 and 17 year olds are now eligible for boosters and are being strongly encourage to take up this offer when invited to do so.

If your child is going to be absent from school please contact the school, as soon as possible, on or prior to the first day of absence by calling the School's Attendance Welfare Officer on 01531 828927. This is a dedicated line open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternatively, you can inform us by emailing attendance@newent.gloucs.sch.uk.

I would politely request that parents and carers keep the school updated, using the dedicated line above, on the outcome of home LFD and any PCR results as well as the recovery, and return date, of their child if a positive result is confirmed. Again, all test results, positive or negative should be recorded [here](#).

As ever, as soon as we are informed of any change in guidance, we will inform you through our normal channels of communication. If you have any queries please feel free to email admin@newent.gloucs.sch.uk

Thank you for your continued support and best wishes for the year ahead.

Yours sincerely



Mr Rhys Phillips
Acting Principal