
Rob Pavey, Headteacher

14 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers of all students,

Outline of mass testing arrangements

The government expectations have been shifting on the implementation of Lateral Flow Tests in school. We support the idea, because it will pick up some cases who would otherwise go undetected, and will help break the chain of transmission. We are now planning on the following elements:

- Ongoing weekly testing of staff (already in place)
- Mass testing of all students on return to school (see below).
- Ongoing drop-in testing of students.

We will not be using the serial testing instead of self-isolation for close contacts, as I do not believe the tests are accurate enough to give any level of confidence in the safety of this proposal. It may be that we will review this if and when better evidence is available.

Mass testing on return

Assuming we return as planned after half term, the outline plan is below. If the return to school is delayed, we will implement this in the first days back.

- INSET day (Mon 22 Feb): Years 11 -13
- Tues 23 Feb: Years 7-10

On these two days, tutor groups will be given a time to arrive and will return home once the testing is complete. There will be online learning for all year groups (Years 11 and 13 to be confirmed once the plans are finalised) on Tuesday 23 Feb.

- Fri 26 Feb: all students will come into school as normal. We will take the opportunity to do a PSHE day in tutor groups, as there is plenty of useful work which we often don't have time

for, and normal teaching will be effectively impossible because of the disruption caused by mass testing. The timings of the day will be normal. Normal academic lessons will continue for Years 11 and 13 as far as possible, although we have not done the planning in sufficient detail yet.

Ongoing drop-in

We will run morning and afternoon drop-in sessions for any student who wants them between 8am and 9am and then 3pm and 4pm, on the understanding that it cannot be used as an excuse to miss lessons.

Call for volunteers

We can staff the initial mass testing internally, but we are going to need volunteers to help carry out the ongoing drop-ins. If you are able to help, we would love to hear from you. Please fill in this form to let us know your availability: <https://forms.gle/T4TaQjq83YVZfLUA6>

We will be in touch soon to arrange DBS checks and training.

Academic study

I would very much like to be able to host a study into the effectiveness of Lateral Flow Tests in school-aged children against PCR tests. If there are any parents with academic links who would be interested in getting such a study up and running, I would very much like to hear from them. Please email me if you would like to explore this further.

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