



Beyond Expectations

Principal: Mr D Keogh B.Ed. (Hons)
 Vice Principal: Mr B Creasy B.Sc (Hons)
 Assistant Principal: Mrs L Kinroy B.A (Hons)
 Assistant Principal: Mr J Bennet B.A (Hons)

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9th December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student

You may already be aware through media coverage that when we return to the Academy in January 2022 students will have to undergo an onsite Covid test. We wanted to update you on arrangements for the start of term and the day to day arrangements we will put in place to accommodate the testing.

The Government has requested that all secondary schools offer students one on-site lateral flow test before resuming the twice weekly home testing. Details about the start of term in January 2022 and our testing arrangements are below.

Plan for testing

We will be offering rapid coronavirus testing to students as they return from Wednesday 5th January 2022. Students will return to face to face education after their first negative result.

To enable us to test all students before resuming face to face education we will be staggering the start of the spring term (please refer to the schedule below). It is crucial that students do not arrive prior to their scheduled time to enable the testing to run smoothly.

Wednesday 5.1.22	8.30am	10.00am	11.00am	
	Year 7 & 11 students who use School Transport (Buses/Taxis) arrive at school	Y7 students who live in Crowle/Ealand arrive at school	Y11 Students who live in Crowle/Ealand arrive at school	Y7/11 Students in Lessons
Y8,9,10 remote learning				
Thursday 6.1.22	8.30am	11.00am	11.30am	12.00pm
	Y,8,9 &10 students who use School Transport (Buses/Taxis) arrive at school	Y8 students who live in Crowle/Ealand arrive at school	Y9 students who live in Crowle/Ealand arrive at school	Y10 students who live in Crowle/Ealand arrive at school
Y7 & 11 students in school				



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As students arrive on the school site they will be registered and directed for testing. Coronavirus tests will take place in the main hall where we can maintain social distancing and privacy.

How the tests work

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The lateral flow tests are quick and easy to undertake, using a swab of the nose and throat. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with the individual participant and if negative they will be directed to class. Whilst waiting for the result of the first Lateral Flow Test students will maintain social distancing. Parents/carers will be informed of any positive results.

What if my child tests positive?

If a student tests positive on a lateral flow device, they will be informed immediately by the Academy and will need to take a further 'PCR test' to confirm the result. This should be on the same day or as soon as possible afterwards. During the time while waiting for the PCR result (via text/email) they will need to self-isolate. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

While a small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, students who test negative will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal.

Consent

We strongly encourage your child to take part so we can help prevent the spread of coronavirus. Testing is voluntary, if you already gave school consent to test your child on-site in March and September 2021 you will **NOT** be required to give consent again. For any students who we do not already have consent for you will have received an email link to a Google Form to complete to give your consent for your child to be tested in school. Please take the time to read all of the details on the consent form and **complete the consent form by 8:00am on Thursday 16th December 2021.**

Close contacts of positive cases

All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will continue to be required to self-isolate and asked to book a PCR test.

The Government plans to introduce Daily Contact Testing as soon as possible as an alternative to self-isolation for contacts of positive Omicron cases who are fully vaccinated or under the age of 18 years and 6 months.

Unvaccinated young people up to the age of 18 years and 6 months and fully vaccinated adults are now no longer required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with other variants of Covid-19, including if they live in the same household. Those identified as a close contact will be informed by NHS Test and Trace that they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. There is no requirement to self-isolate while awaiting PCR test results and so students identified as close contacts should continue to attend school as normal.



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Risk Assessments

The updated Covid-19 Risk Assessment taking into account our plans for reopening is available on our Academy website. The Risk Assessment will be under continual review.

Face coverings

Face coverings will remain in place on the Academy site in communal areas as they were for students at the end of the current term. We encourage students to continue to wear face coverings on school transport.

Transport

Buses will be running as normal. As a reminder -

Double Decker Buses - Students sit in the following zones:

- Lower Deck - Year 11 at rear and Year 10 at front
- Upper Deck - Year 9 at the rear, Year 8 in the middle section and Year 7 in the front section

Single Decker Buses – Students sit in the following zones:

- Year 11 in the rear section followed by Year 10, Year 9, Year 8 and Year 7 in the front section of seats

Students must use their bus pass each day and also only use the bus that their pass allows them to travel on.

As we have done all the way through the pandemic we will keep in communication with public health officials. We will keep our arrangements under review and take advice from public health if there is an outbreak of Covid cases in our Academy community.

We will support our staff and students throughout; please do not hesitate to contact the Academy if you need anything clarifying or you need support in any way.

Yours sincerely

D Keogh
Principal