

25/2/2021

## **Arrangements for return to school for all students**

Dear Parent/Carer

While 2021 hasn't started in the way any of us would have liked, I hope this letter finds you safe and well. As you will know, as part of the road map to lifting lockdown restrictions issued by the Government this week, schools are set to fully reopen during the week of 8<sup>th</sup> March. We're looking forward to being able to welcome all students back into school where they belong and hope that this will be the last time that education is so significantly disrupted.

There are a number of arrangements that need to be made to allow for the successful return of all students which I'll detail below. I appreciate there will be a lot of information here to take in, but please do read it carefully and share key messages with your child. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with school.

### **COVID Testing**

As part of the safety measures to reduce the spread of asymptomatic infection all students will access lateral flow testing in school on their return. This will be carried out on their first session back in school and repeated in line with the dates listed below. I've enclosed further information on this testing and a consent form to be returned to school, where possible, please return this consent via email to [COVID@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:COVID@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk) - if you are unable to do so please ensure your child brings it with them on their return to school.

Following these initial tests, we will be providing students with home testing kits, this will allow students to complete a test twice weekly at home on Sunday and Wednesday nights in order to help identify anyone who may be infectious without symptoms.

Any student receiving a positive test will need to inform school; self-isolate in line with national guidelines and book a confirmatory PCR test at a testing centre. Staff are also participating in regular testing and so this is a really positive step in helping to reduce the risk of infection to everyone within the school community.



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**If a student were to receive a positive test result during the initial in school testing they will need to leave school to self-isolate, with that in mind it is essential that we have contact details for a parent or responsible person who will be available to be contacted during the school day.**

### **Start Dates**

It is going to take some time to be able to complete initial tests with students on their return to school. To enable this to take place we will be staggering the day on which students return into school by group. The table below details which date each group will return to school and have their initial COVID test.

**Students who are currently accessing the limited in school provision will continue to attend as normal throughout. If your child is accessing a bespoke timetable (e.g. reduced days) we will make direct contact to confirm specific arrangements**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Return Date (Test 1)</b>	<b>Test 2</b>	<b>Test 3</b>
Pathway 1	Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Weds 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> March
Pathway 2	Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> March	Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> March
Pathway 3	Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> March
Pathway 4	Mon 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> March
Pathway 5 (Year 10)	Weds 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> March
Pathway 5 (Year 11)	Tues 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Fri 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> March

### **Attendance**

The Government have taken the decision that school attendance will again be made compulsory with this easing of restrictions. We fully understand that the changes and disruption to education during this year will have been difficult for many students and families and their may be anxieties around the return to school. If you are worried about the ways your child is feeling about the return to school, please let us know and we will offer as much support as possible.

As attendance is compulsory please return to informing school of any reasons for absence, as if we're unable to establish reasons for absence we have to mark this as unauthorised. I must remind you that the legal responsibility for school attendance is with parents and the Local Authority may issue Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents where students are not attending school regularly.



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## GCSEs 2021

We've started to receive information this week about the awarding process for GCSEs this summer. We're working through the implications of this now and will share details of this and what it means for the end of their time at school. We'll share these details with families who will be impacted directly in the near future.

## In School Safety Measures

While the reduction in overall rates of infection make all environments safer, we do need to continue with the safety measures that were in place in school prior to Christmas, please do encourage your child to ensure they are prepared to follow those in the same way they will be in any public spaces.

Students will continue to be expected to wash/sanitise their hands at regular intervals and clean down workspaces between lessons. While there can be some cross-over between groups within school it is still important to try and limit the number of contacts any individual has so students will be expected to be in the right places at the right time and respect social distancing measures. **In addition, in line with national guidance all students will be expected to wear face coverings when in shared indoor spaces around school.**

## Self-Isolation

The most effective measure to reduce the risk of COVID transmission remains the self-isolation of anyone who may be infectious. Anyone who displays any of the 3 main symptoms of COVID:

- A new, continuous cough
- A high temperature
- Loss of taste and/or smell

Must self-isolate immediately and book a COVID test – this needs to be done regardless of the outcome of a home testing kit. Anyone testing positive is required to self-isolate for 10 days from the start of their



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symptoms. Household members of anyone who is displaying these symptoms are also required to self-isolate until a negative result is received.

Likewise, anyone who is identified as a close contact of an individual who has received a positive test result is required to self-isolate for 10 days following their last contact with the positive individual.

In any circumstances where your child is required to self-isolate please inform school as soon as possible, either by phone or by emailing [COVID@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:COVID@thebridge.cheshire.sch.uk)

Remote learning will continue to be made available for students who are required to self-isolate to allow them to continue to access their education throughout that period.

We know that recent restrictions have made things more difficult for families, with the pressures of being constantly cooped up together while trying to support remote learning and maintain. There is a lot of negative press at the moment about young people, how far behind they are and how damaged they might be as a result of lockdown restrictions. One of our core values in school is resilience and I'd just like to take this opportunity to remind you that young people are very resilient and will be able to bounce back from any difficulties they might be having. Where they are finding this particularly hard though, we will be here to support them and you as a family.

I'll close as I started, we're very much looking forward to welcoming all students back into school in the very near future.

Best Wishes

Mr A Stewart  
Headteacher