

29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **COVID-19 Update**

I hope that you and your families are well.

I am writing to update you on developments with home testing arrangements for students, changes to test and trace arrangements and also the latest guidance for schools from the Department of Education

#### **Home testing**

The loosening of national restrictions over the next few weeks will be very welcome but will bring with them increased risk of transmission. To reduce risk and keep everyone safe it is important to continue testing at home during the Easter holiday and into next term. Therefore, could you continue to:

- test your children twice a week at home (on Wednesday and Sunday).
- report results, whether positive or negative, and inform the school of these results.
- test your children before the start of next term, either on the evening before term starts or in the morning of the first day of term before they go to school.

We will be distributing additional testing kits at the end of term for students to use over the holiday period. Two kits, each with three tests, will be sent home with your son or daughter on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April. Thank you for recording the results of these and for informing the school of the test results, we would like you to continue to do this as it is helpful to know how many tests are being carried out each week.

We are aware that a small number of lateral flow test results in BANES have been entered incorrectly on the NHS test and trace system, with negative results being entered incorrectly as positive. If this happens then you must get a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible, rather than take another lateral flow test. NHS Test and Trace will contact anyone who reports a positive test result and you will need to take a PCR test to override the positive test result on the system.

Please remember that lateral flow tests are not to be used if your child has COVID-19 symptoms, they are for asymptomatic testing only. If your child has any symptoms then you must arrange a PCR test.

It remains the case that you should arrange a confirmatory PCR test following a positive lateral flow test. In both cases your child should not go to school unless they have a negative PCR test result.

### **Test and Trace**

Parents and carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their school or by NHS Test and Trace may now be eligible to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment. For more information please follow this link: [Test and Trace Support Payment](#).

### **Guidance for Educational Settings update**

- **Face coverings**  
The requirement for face coverings to be worn in lessons will be reviewed at Easter.
- **Educational visits**  
Schools will be allowed to resume educational day visits from April 12<sup>th</sup>; there will be additional requirements in place to ensure that these can be conducted safely and we will be reviewing whether we will resume these once we have carried out the required risk assessments. Our intention will be to allow visits that are linked to the curriculum to take place in the first instance and then to consider whether other visits can take place during either Terms 5 or 6.
- **Extra-curricular provision**  
We have already resumed extra-curricular activities for PE and music and will look to extend the extra-curricular offer at the school as the summer terms progress. It is now possible to play competitive fixtures against other schools and we will aim to do so at the earliest opportunity.

Hopefully we will see further restrictions being eased over the next two terms.

Best wishes



Steven Mackay  
**Headteacher**