



Smithdon High School
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5 January 2022

Dear parents

Happy New Year to you and your families. We hope you were able to have a lovely holiday and remain well. We are looking forward to seeing everyone soon.

We will endeavour to ensure the school remains open to all students at all times with as normal a routine as possible; however we will need to respond to the local Covid situation at all times, including the safety of students in school should we have a staffing shortage at any point due to Covid positive isolations.

We would like to share some key information with you before the term begins:

First, a reminder that we are beginning the new term by **reinforcing expectations**, including correct uniform, appropriate hair colour, minimum jewellery, correct footwear (no trainers), etc. (uniform guidelines were sent out before the holiday).

Secondly, please be aware that **Year 9 students' lunch and break times are changing** to be alongside the Year 10 and Year 11 breaks. This means that they will now have a break between 11 and 11.20am and lunch between 1.20 and 2pm.

Thirdly, the plans set up for **testing before students return** are in place, but the guidance from the DfE has changed regarding those students (and staff) who have tested positive for Covid in the last 90 days: *"Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site through ATS or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection."*

A reminder that our return to school is as follows:

- Wednesday 5 January - Years 7, 8 and 11 - covid testing appointments
- Thursday 6 January - Years 7, 8 and 11 in school as normal
- Years 9 and 10 - covid testing appointments
- Friday 7 January - ALL YEARS in school as normal

Fourth, the DfE and the Government has announced in the last two days that *"it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated."* As such, we will now require students and staff, unless exempt, to wear appropriate face coverings in all classrooms and indoor communal areas on site, other than when eating and drinking. Those who are exempt, must wear a visible badge or lanyard to identify them as exempt to prevent them being continually challenged for not wearing a mask. This requirement will be reviewed regularly, alongside the guidance from the government and the DfE.

Finally, there have been several **changes to the Covid guidance and isolation rules** over the festive period. These are summarised for your ease below.

With best wishes and hope for a better 2022,

Mrs A Gibbins
Head of School

Covid Positive Guidance and Isolation Rules Jan 2022

Following a Positive PCR Test:

- Take an LFT on Day 6 and Day 7 of the self-isolation period, at least 24 hours apart (but no sooner than day 6)
- If both LFTs are negative results and the person does not have a high temperature, there is no need to complete 10 full days of self-isolation
- Two negatives and no temperature = return to school/work on Day 8.

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

Further information is available in the stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection?utm_source=2%20January%202022%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

Following close contact with a person who has tested Positive

(classed as contact 2 days prior to their symptoms beginning or their positive test result if no symptoms)

- People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.
- Adults with only one vaccine, or less than 21 days since their second vaccine, should isolate for 10 days from the contact date.
- People with no vaccinations, should isolate for 10 days from the contact date