

31st December 2020

January 2021 phased return and COVID-19 testing information

Dear Parents/Guardians

Following yesterday's Government announcement, I am writing to update you on the phased return to on-site provision for all John Ferneley students this January. This letter also includes key information about testing taking place on-site this term. I will write to you again at the beginning of the new term to outline further details and our school approach for testing staff and students on-site.

Following government guidance, the plans for all students to return to education are as follows:

- **Monday 4th January 2021**
First day of the new term for all students. All students in Years 7 – 11 unless critical / vulnerable (see below) to follow remote education from home until Monday 11th (Year 11), or Monday 18th January 2021 (Years 7 – 10).
- **Monday 4th January 2021 - Vulnerable Students / Students of Critical Workers ONLY**
Full-time on-site provision will be available for all vulnerable students and students of critical workers **only**. Invitations have been sent via email today by Miss Bradley to those parents/guardians of students who have been identified in the above categories and will need to attend school in person from Monday 4th January.
- **Remote Education**
If your child/children have not been confirmed for on-site provision, they must stay at home until either Monday 11th for Year 11's or Monday 18th for all other year groups. During this period they should follow remote education via their 'Teams' platform. **Please ensure that your son/daughter is logged onto 'Teams' for 8.45am Monday - Friday, and ready to join their classes for the duration of the school day.** During this period, there will be a live input and/or their class teacher will be available for the duration of the lesson, to answer any questions that they may have on the work set. A reminder that we return on Monday to WEEK 1 timetable.
- **Monday 11th January 2021**
All Year 11 students to return to on-site provision, alongside our vulnerable students and students of critical workers.
- **Monday 18th January 2021**
All Year Groups to return to on-site provision as normal.

Those students prioritised for on-site provision will be kept in their consistent Year Group 'bubbles' in the week commencing 4th and 11th January, until all Year Groups return to normal on-site provision on Monday 18th January. Outside of school, students must continue to adhere to [local tier restrictions](#).

The Government's approach is intended to minimise the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) in education beyond the start of term and to support all students attending education. Being in education is vital for children's development and well-being. Time spent out of settings is detrimental to children's learning, development and well-being, particularly for disadvantaged children.

In relation to working in schools, while it is not possible to ensure a totally risk-free environment, there is no evidence that children transmit the disease any more than adults, and no evidence that staff in education settings are at any greater risk of fatal outcomes than many other occupations.

NHS Test and Trace: COVID-19 testing for staff and students

We continue to keep John Ferneley College as safe as possible for all students and staff throughout the pandemic.

Alongside the government's announcement for a phased return this January, and as you know they are also prioritising all **secondary-age students for regular testing on-site, in response to the recent high rates of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. Staff will also be awarded weekly testing.**

Testing will be rolled out at John Ferneley College during week commencing Monday 11th January with Year 11 prioritised for testing as they return to on-site provision. All other on-site provision students will be tested over the course of the week commencing Monday 11th January. Students will be encouraged to have a test but should not be required to have had one as a condition of being allowed to return to school on Monday 18th January.

The rapid-result tests are also known as 'lateral flow' tests and produce a result in 30 minutes. They do not require a laboratory to process, unlike the more common PCR tests. The Government believes that, in the main, secondary-aged students can self-administer, under the supervision of an adult.

Anyone who has a 'positive' test result from having taken a rapid-result test in school will then be sent home for a more-typical PCR test. Equally, anyone who is showing symptoms of COVID-19 who has a negative result from a rapid-result test, will still be required to self-isolate until, again, a PCR test has been taken.

Testing: registration and consent forms to be completed

In order for your child/children to be tested on-site, you must, first, complete one registration form and one consent form, per child. These forms will be circulated to you during w/c Monday 4th January via email, and copies will be available from our latest news article on the school website here > <https://www.johnferneley.org/january2021>

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep John Ferneley open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 16s, staff will oversee the swab process. Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed via text message / email.

We know these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently. Testing will be offered free of charge.

Please see overleaf for parent/guardian FAQs guide on testing in school. Please also click the link to access the [instructional leaflet](#) from the NHS.

We will continue to support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you have any further questions and we will do our best to answer in a timely manner. You can call the school Reception from w/c 4th January (8am – 4pm) on **01664 565901** or contact **Miss Bradley** at cbradley@johnferneley.org, or **Mrs Teece** at nteece@mowbrayeducation.org.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Christine Stansfield
CEO/Executive Headteacher
cstansfield@mowbrayeducation.org

COVID-19 Testing – parent/guardian FAQs

What if a student tests positive?

Participating staff and students who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Students will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). You can go to <http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test.

During this time while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email) they will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result you will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from [NHS Test and Trace](#).

What happens if the test is negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student will only be told if they test positive on a 'lateral flow' test, so if you do not hear you can assume it was negative. A small number of students may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to school if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can.

What if my child develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.