



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

Whitburn, Sunderland, SR6 7EF Principal: J E Crowe B.A. (Hons)
Telephone: 0191 529 3712 Facsimile 0191 529 5569 E-mail: office@whitburncofeacademy.org

'Excellence for All'

2nd March 2021

Re: The asymptomatic testing of students and return to face-to-face teaching

Dear Parent/Carer

I am pleased to outline our plans for the arrangements for the asymptomatic testing of consenting students and our phased return to face-to-face teaching.

In order to facilitate large scale testing, the testing of consenting students and return dates will be staggered as follows:

Year Groups	First Asymptomatic Testing Date for consenting students	Return to School Date for face to face lessons for all students
7, 12 and 13	Friday 5 th March	Monday 8 th March
10 and 11	Monday 8 th March	Tuesday 9 th March
8 and 9	Tuesday 9 th March	Wednesday 10 th March

On the date of their first asymptomatic test, work will be set on Teams for students in those year groups. There will be no live lessons for the year groups being tested on that day. Year groups not being tested on that day will receive live lessons as normal. Students will follow their usual timetables from their return date with normal school start and finish times.

Children of key/critical workers and vulnerable children will attend on site as per the norm and, if consent received, will be tested along with their Year group. Children of key/critical workers and vulnerable children will re-join their year group bubble on the day their year group returns to face-to-face lessons.

Lateral Flow Testing Process – *Separate details with timings for the first test will be sent out to each year group and these will be done on an alphabetical basis.*

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. Results take around half an hour to come back and the process is outlined below:

1. Mobile phones are not allowed in the testing centre or waiting areas.

Document available in large font, alternative language or audio format on request



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2. Students must arrive at the yard at their allocated time with a face covering. They must arrive on time and ensure social distancing is maintained. Due to restrictions in place with visitors, parents are unable to accompany their child.
3. Designated staff members will welcome them and direct them to the South entrance.
4. Students will be directed into the testing centre where staff will greet and register them. They will also explain the process and observe them carrying out the testing.
5. Testing is conducted in discreet bays with as much privacy as can be afforded.
6. **For first test only** - as soon as a student is tested, they will wait in the Sports Hall, with a staff member supervising, whilst they wait for their test result. This should take about 30 minutes. In the event of a positive result, parent/carers will be contacted to collect.
7. Students must go straight home after their first test result has been given and not congregate in the local area. If parent/carers can support this by dropping their child off closely to the school and collect them afterwards this will be greatly appreciated.
8. For tests 2 and 3, students will return immediately to their lesson. In the unlikely event of them testing positive, a staff member will collect them from their lesson. They will be taken to an area to wait and parents will be informed to collect them. The isolation period of 10 days will commence as per PHE guidance.
9. As before, the school will then at this point begin the process of identifying close contacts who will also need to go home and begin their 10 day isolation period.
10. Following these initial 3 tests in school, consenting students will continue with twice weekly testing using home test kits that will be issued at that point.

As a reminder, the testing programme at school is for students with no symptoms. If anyone develops symptoms at any time they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test online or by calling 119. Students should not be on site if they are displaying any symptoms. Students presenting in the testing location with symptoms will not be permitted entry and parents will be contacted. We understand that students may well be nervous about self-administering the test initially. Our staff have been trained to support and will do so with care and kindness.

Control Measures

We have reviewed our risk assessment and the previous control measures will be in place such as one-way systems, regular hand washing and sanitising, ventilation in all classrooms, bubbles for social spaces, staggered access to Food for Thought catering facilities. As of Monday 8th March, transport will run in the same way as before Christmas and so students can expect the dedicated scholars' buses to be in service. As students are mixed on their bus route to and from school, this is an additional reason for us deciding to alphabetically stagger the first testing and return to school to reduce spread before asymptomatic cases have a chance of being picked up.

Face Masks

In line with this PHE and government guidance, when students return to school, they will be asked to wear face coverings in classrooms and corridors. These do not need to be worn once outside of the buildings and not in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. **Therefore all students (unless exempt because of a physical impairment or disability, illness or mental health difficulties) will be asked to wear masks at all times in classrooms, public areas and on corridors.** If your child is exempt, please can you email office@whitburncofeacademy.org to let us know by Friday 5th March and we will arrange to provide your child with a lanyard so that all staff and peers are aware.

Although we will have a contingency supply, please ensure that **all** students have clean face masks with them on their return to school.

I value your support regarding the staggered start back to face to face lesson. As you can imagine, the logistical planning involved in testing approximately 1000 students whilst bringing all students back to school has been quite a challenge. I do appreciate that some parents/carers may have to make alternative arrangements to facilitate their child getting into school for their first test. We have done this in order to get as many of our students back on site as soon and as safely as possible with minimum disruption to learning.

I am sure you will hope with me that we won't have to repeat any further lockdown situations and the "road-map" takes us closer to normal life returning.

Yours faithfully

J E Crowe
Principal