



5th January 2022

Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers

Re: Covid-19 Measures

I would like to start this update by wishing you a happy and healthy 2022.

On Sunday 2nd January, we received a letter from the Secretary of State for Education which provided an update on the return to college after the holiday. As a result, a number of changes have been made to the current COVID-19 measures within the Trust.

Updated guidance on the use of face coverings

From the start of term, it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms as well as in all communal areas and on transport. This advice is short term only, to support students and teachers as they return to college this term. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26th January at which point it will be reviewed.

Please ensure that your child has a mask with them every day when they come to college.

Changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

Since Wednesday 22nd December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for Covid-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Students may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to college from day 8. Please log the results of these tests on Test Register as usual. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

As from Tuesday 11th January, under new guidance, anyone who receives a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test result with no symptoms should report their result and must self-isolate immediately, they will not need to take a follow up PCR test. They will still need to self-isolate for at least 7 days, but only from the date of their positive lateral flow test.

Daily testing for contacts of Covid-19

A new national approach to daily testing for contact of Covid-19 has been introduced. All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with Covid-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing for contacts of Covid-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also keep learners in face to face education. Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff and students should do a lateral flow test each day for 7 days and report the results to the NHS through the Online Reporting System and to the College. If they test negative, they can continue to attend college. If they test positive, they should self-isolate and arrange a PCR test to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.

Further points

We continue to encourage all staff and students to test twice weekly using lateral flow devices (LFD) and to report results to both the NHS and college and we urge everyone to ensure they engage with the vaccination programme, including boosters when eligible.

As a final note, could I please remind you that students should not come into college if they are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (such as a high temperature; new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and arrange a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Best wishes

Heidi Faure

Chief Officer – Operations