



## Christleton High School

*This email was sent to all Parents and Carers on 24/02/2021*

Dear Parents and Carers

On Monday afternoon, the Prime Minister made a statement in the House of Commons in which he introduced the Government's 'roadmap' and announced that schools and colleges will reopen to all students from 8<sup>th</sup> March. I am writing to update you on our responses to that announcement and subsequent directives from the Department for Education (DfE).

### **The Government's 'roadmap'**

A summary description of the Government's roadmap can be found by following this link:

[Coronavirus Covid-19 contingency framework for education and childcare settings](#)

The first step, **from 8<sup>th</sup> March**, will see all students return to face-to-face education in schools.

A summary of the main provisions for schools:

- Schools and colleges will reopen to all students **from 8<sup>th</sup> March**.
- All secondary school and college students will take Covid-19 tests as they return to the classroom from the 8<sup>th</sup> March. Secondary schools will have discretion on how to stagger the return of their students over that week to allow them to be tested on return. After an initial programme of tests in school, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home.
- Protective measures across education will be strengthened. Staff and students in secondary schools will now have to wear face coverings in all areas, **including classrooms**, where social distancing cannot be maintained. This policy will be reviewed during the Easter break. We realise that for some students, wearing a mask is not compatible with a pre-existing medical condition. We ask parents and carers to provide a note to form tutors outlining the medical need for not wearing a mask.

### **Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) adults and children**

The Department of Health and Social Care has added a third category to the definition of clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV):

[Definition of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Groups](#)

Individuals identified as CEV through this risk assessment are advised to follow the guidance:

[Guidance on shielding and protecting extremely vulnerable persons from covid-19](#)

Shielding for CEV has now been extended until 31<sup>st</sup> March. Anyone newly identified as part of this group will be notified.

## Covid-19 Testing

The evidence shows that as many as one in three people who contract the virus show no symptoms, so could be spreading the disease unknowingly. Asymptomatic testing is designed to help to identify positive cases more quickly and break the chains of transmission.

We have raised concerns about the efficacy and reliability of Lateral Flow Device tests and the teaching unions have been talking to senior officials in DfE and Public Health England about our concerns. No test is perfect, but Public Health England's view is that the speed and convenience of Lateral Flow Device tests supports detection of the virus in asymptomatic individuals who would not otherwise be tested.

In relation to the operational guidance for schools for Covid-19 testing, the headlines are:

- Secondary school and college students will take Covid-19 tests as they return to the classroom **from the 8<sup>th</sup> March** at existing school-based test facilities.
- Schools and colleges will **have discretion on how to phase the return of their students over that week** to allow them to be tested before returning.
- Students should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Students not undergoing testing should attend school in line with the phased return arrangements. Schools will have discretion on how to test students over that week as they return to the classroom.
- After an initial programme of tests in a school/college, students will be provided with two rapid tests to use each week at home.
- Secondary schools should offer students tests three to five days apart, to manage the number of students passing through the test site at any one time.

All tests will be conducted in the school gym, where we have eight testing booths set up and a team of volunteers to oversee the testing process. Students are expected to swab themselves. We have successfully run our testing programme with all staff and students who have been attending our Emergency Provision since January.

Testing kits for home testing will be delivered to school this week and we will distribute these to students once the initial three tests have been conducted.

In the case of a positive test result amongst staff or students, the school will continue to follow the Track and Trace regulations laid down by Public Health England. This means that anyone who is deemed to have been in 'close contact' with a positive case, will need to self-isolate in line with regulations. It is therefore important that parents and carers remain alert to symptoms and inform us immediately you suspect symptoms and arrange a PCR test. The home testing LFD test kits are specifically designed to trace individuals who do not present symptoms - they are not to be used on those who are experiencing symptoms.

**Our timetable for testing and return to school is as follows:**

**Monday 8th March** - Year 13 and Year 11 testing. Both Year groups **return to school on Tuesday 9th March**. Year 13 will only be expected to attend when they have a mock exam. Students attending our Emergency Provision will be able to attend from this date.

**Tuesday 9th March** - Year 10 and Year 7 testing. Both Year groups **return to school on Wednesday 10th March**

**Wednesday 10th March** - Year 12 and Year 8 testing. Both Year groups **return to school on Thursday 11th March**

**Thursday 11th March** - Year 9 testing - Year 9 **return to school on Friday 12th March**.

We will write to you later in the week with the timing of testing and the arrangements for arriving and leaving the school site.

Second and third tests will start on Friday 12th March.

Until students return to school, remote blended learning provision will continue. During this time, teachers will be both teaching face to face in school and remotely for those still at home. Please allow some flexibility in timing of these remote lessons.

When students return to school during the week beginning 8th March, they will continue to follow the timetable that was in place during the Autumn term. Timings of the school day for each Key Stage are attached to this email as a reminder.

### **Volunteers required**

This increase in the scale of testing, means that we need to recruit and train another team of volunteers to aid the testing process and thereby speed up the return to school. Please find attached a letter, outlining the nature of the role and how to register your interest. **Deadline for registering your interest is Monday 1st March.**

### **Consent for testing**

In order to complete the testing of students, the school requires consent by parents/carers. The link to the consent form is given below; please register your consent by **Monday 1st March**. If consent is not given, the DfE guidance makes clear that students can return to school at the same time as the planned return date for their Year group.

Link to consent form:

[Consent form for COVID-19 testing in secondary schools and colleges](#)

Also attached to this email, you will find, a DfE privacy notice and instructions on how to conduct a test.

I also need to make clear that wearing appropriate face coverings will now be compulsory in all internal areas of the school; this includes classrooms. The government will review this directive after the Easter break. Please ensure that your child has a suitable face covering when they attend for their test and on their return to school.

The demands placed on us are considerable, but we have a plan. I know that some parents expected a full return to school on the 8th March - the guidance from the DfE makes clear that schools fully reopen from the 8th March and that schools should manage the phased return based on their own context - this phased return is the only way we can fulfil their other requirement of testing students before they return.

Please keep an eye on our website and further updates will be posted should these plans change, or further information become available.

Thank you for all you have done during the lockdown and for your work in ensuring that we have had a very high level of engagement with our remote learning provision. It will be invaluable to help with the reintegration back to face-to-face teaching. I will write to you again, once school has fully reopened, with details of our recovery plans and of course, for Year 11 and 13 students and parents, on Ofqual's plans for teacher assessed grades that will replace GCSE, BTEC and A-level exams this summer.

Whilst there is still a lot on uncertainty in the world of education, I can say that we are very much looking forward to welcoming our students back into school and I hope they are too!

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Best wishes

Darran Jones

Headteacher

**Christleton High School**

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✉ *Village Road, Christleton, Chester CH3 7AD*

☎ *01244 335843*

Attachments:

- Letter 1 - Covid testing from 08 March 2021
- Letter 2 - Volunteers required for testing
- DfE Covid Testing Privacy Notice
- Covid 19 test instructions
- Timings of the school day from 08 March 2021