

17st December 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

I hope that you and those around you remain well.

As we reach the end of Term 2 and the extraordinary year of 2021 nears its conclusion, I wanted to provide one final end of Term letter of 2021 (unless we see more DfE guidance changes over the holiday period) to highlight a few important matters relating to our school and recent DfE Covid-19 guidance:

- **Updated School Operating Guidance Changes for 'Plan B' of the Covid-19 Response**
- **Cases of Covid 19 in School**
- **Start of Term 3 Arrangements and Staggered Return for Students in January 2022 to accommodate LFD onsite test requirements**
- **Remote Learning during the January Staggered Return**
- **Contact Tracing and Isolation Changes**
- **LFD Home Testing**
- **Provision of LFD Test Kits**
- **Update on the delivery of the 12 to 15 Covid Vaccination Programme**
- **Staff Changes**
- **Term Dates 2022/23**
- **Wiltshire Public Health Information - Play your part over Christmas**
- **Thank you and Merry Christmas**

Updated School Operating Guidance Changes for 'Plan B' of the Covid-19 Response

On Wednesday 8 December, the Prime Minister announced the implementation of [Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan](#), to reduce pressure on the NHS. Plan B sets out a number of additional measures across society to control transmission of COVID-19.

The Government is clear on the critical importance of not disrupting the education of children and young people and the Government will prioritise keeping all education and childcare settings open.

The new measures, many of which we already had in place as part of our existing range of controls, are as follows:

- School attendance remains mandatory and all the usual rules continue to apply.

- The recently reintroduced temporary measures on face coverings remain the same. Face coverings should be worn by pupils in Year 7 and above, staff and visitors in communal areas, unless exempt. Pupils and students in Year 7 and above must also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and should wear it on dedicated transport to and from school or college. Face coverings are not recommended in classrooms unless advised by local Directors of Public Health.
- Staff who can work from home should do so from Monday 13 December. All education and childcare settings are expected to continue to provide face-to-face teaching, and staff should continue to attend their place of work if required in order to deliver this. Teaching and learning should not be moved online as a result of the work from home guidance.
- People previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher risk are not being advised to shield again.
- All those involved in education and childcare settings are strongly encouraged to continue regular LFD testing and reporting their results, and to encourage pupils in Year 7 and above to do the same.
- Settings are strongly encouraged to ask parents, guardians and other visitors to take an LFD test before entering the setting.
- Vocational and technical exams and formal assessments timetabled for January will go ahead.
- Secondary schools should continue to plan to provide an on-site test for pupils on return in January. **(see point below)**
- Changes to close contact isolation rules & the introduction of daily contact testing **(see point below)**

Cases of Covid-19 in School

I know we will all be very concerned about the latest developments relating to the Omicron variant and how this will affect our Christmas plans and our return to school in January. The picture is changing fast and will, no doubt, continue to change rapidly over coming days. As of today, our number of positive Covid cases remains in the low single figures; it has remained steadily at this level for the last couple of weeks.

Whilst we have remained very vigilant about the risk of infection and transmission, we feel confident that our current control measures remain appropriate and will remain in place for our return in January unless DfE and local Public Health advice state otherwise.

Start of Term 3 Arrangements and Staggered Return for Students in January 2022 to accommodate on-site LFD test requirements

As you will now be aware we are required to provide one on-site Covid LFD test to all students (who have consent) on their return from the Christmas break in January. As a result of the amazing response to our request for parental help with running our on-site test centre we should be in a position to run it in much the same way as we did for our return back in September. This does mean we do need to stagger the start of term 3 for different year groups in order to accommodate all our students through the test centre.

All students will have one lateral flow test in school and will then return home. If their LFD result returns as negative they will be able to start school the next school day and thereafter should continue LFD testing at home twice a week. The table below indicates when school starts for each year group.

	Tuesday 4 th Jan	Wednesday 5 th Jan	Thursday 6 th Jan	Friday 7 th Jan
Year 7	Remote Learning	Remote Learning	LFD Test in school & return home	In school following normal timetable
Year 8	Remote Learning	Remote Learning	LFD Test in school & return home	In school following normal timetable
Year 9	Remote Learning	LFD Test in school & return home	In school following normal timetable	In school following normal timetable
Year 10	Remote Learning	LFD Test in school & return home	In school following normal timetable	In school following normal timetable
Year 11	LFD Test in school & return home	In school following normal timetable	In school following normal timetable	In school following normal timetable
C6th	LFD Test in school & return home	Year 12 in school following normal timetable Year 13 PPEs	Year 12 in school following normal timetable Year 13 PPEs	Year 12 in school following normal timetable Year 13 PPEs

Testing is voluntary and students not undergoing testing should return to school in line with our arrangements, above. For example, if a Year 8 student is not participating in testing their first day back at school will be the day after the 1st Covid test for their year group, on Friday 7th January.

Administering the test should only take 5 minutes but please allow approximately between 15 and 30 minutes for your LFD Test Appointment.

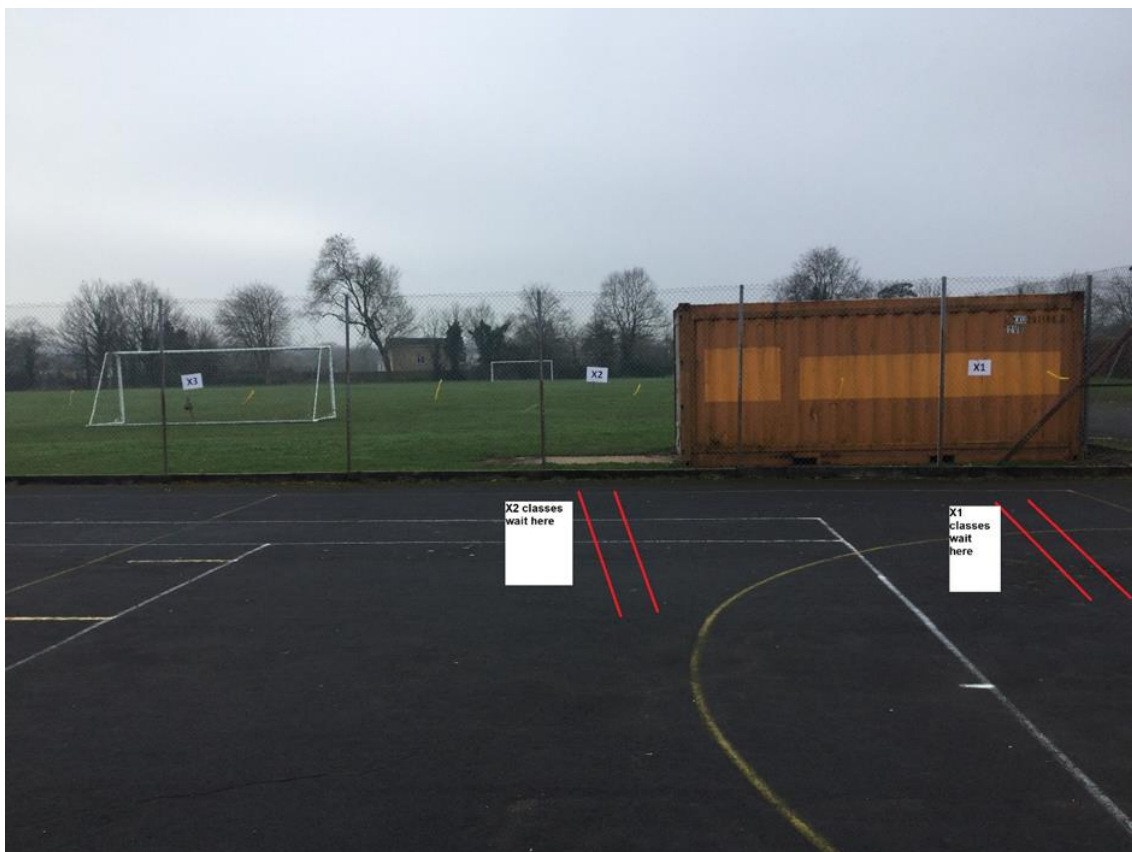
Appointment times for their January return LFD Test (students do not need to wear uniform as they return home afterwards) are below

Time	Tuesday Jan 4 th 2022	Wednesday Jan 5 th 2022	Thursday Jan 6 th 2022
8.30 am.	Tutor Groups 11F1, 11F2	Tutor Groups 10F1, 10H1	Tutor Groups 8S1, 8H2
9.00 am.	11H1, 11H2	10S1, 10S2	8H1, 8F1
9.30 am.	11S1, 11S2	10B1, 10B2	8B1 8B2
10.00 am.	11B1	10H2	8F2
10.30 am.			7B1, 7B2
11.00 am	Year 12		
11.30 am.		9B1, 9B2	7F1, 7F2
12.00	Year 13	9F1, 9F2, 9H1	7H1, H2
12.30 pm.		9S1, 9S2	7S1, 7S2
	Year 11 and C6th resume classes Wednesday 5th	Year 10 and 9 resume classes Thursday 6th	Year 8 and 7 resume classes on Friday 7th

As a reminder, parents should bring their children to the Springfield car park and a member of senior staff will greet students at the blue H block gate next to the All-Weather Pitch, asking them to sanitise and then directing them to the H block playground.

Another member of senior staff will greet them on the playground, showing where they line up. The playground fences have markers to show where each Tutor Group line up. Students will be given their pre-registered card on entry to the Test Centre. Students must have these to take the LFD test; these cards ensure that results go automatically to those who need them. Once tested, students are directed to leave via the same blue H block gate and return home.

The photos below show how lining up should work Tuesday through to Thursday.





Remote Learning during the January Staggered Return

As a result of the staggered start with students and staff returning to face-to-face provision from Wednesday 5th through to Friday 7th Jan, we will be providing Remote Learning for the days students are not in school in the first week of our return.

The day when students are required to come in for their LFD test will involve periods of time when students will be travelling into school to undertake their LFD test before returning home again. We will adapt our Remote Learning offer for each of these days by moving to pre-recorded consolidation activities, with no requirement to meet live and no requirement for students to complete the lessons if they miss them.

Mrs Bartlett will be writing separately to remind parents of our remote learning protocols whilst also introducing them to our new parents who will possibly have been lucky enough to avoid having to use them in the last two terms.

Contact Tracing and Isolation Changes

As was reported in a letter from Mr Smith this week, on Tuesday 14th December, the government introduced a new national approach for contacts of Covid-19, based on daily testing.

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 seven days instead of self-isolating. Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for seven days and report the results through the [Online](#)

[Reporting System](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and order a PCR test to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for ten days. 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.

Children under five years old do not need to take part in daily testing and do not need to isolate.

Anyone over the age of 18 years and 6 months who is not vaccinated must isolate in line with government guidelines if they are a close contact of a positive case.

Close contacts in schools continue to be identified by [NHS Test and Trace](#).

LFD Home Testing

Throughout the Christmas holidays and into the spring term, it is strongly encouraged that all education staff and students in Year 7 and above continue regular testing twice a week (LFD not PCR) and report their results.

The new guidance also asks parents, guardians and other visitors to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before entering an education setting for any event or planned meeting.

Provision of LFD test kits

We will continue to provide students with LFD Test kits as part of the asymptomatic twice weekly testing programme. Your child should have returned home with their latest supply this week. Should you run out and require further Test Kits then you can access these from via the following links:

Wiltshire community LFD collection sites: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - Wiltshire Council](#) (note: People will be limited to two boxes of seven tests)

Pharmacies providing tests: <https://find-covid-19-rapid-test-sites.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>

Ordering online: [Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Update on the delivery of the 12 to 15 Covid Vaccination Programme

All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters, as vaccines are our best defence against COVID-19. They help protect young people and adults, and benefit those around them. Vaccination makes people less likely to catch the virus, less likely to pass it on and remain the best way we can protect ourselves and help keep children and young people in face-to-face education.

Students aged 16 years and over

Students aged 18 years and over will be offered a booster dose of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine. We would encourage all those who are eligible to take up their booster dose

16 and 17 year olds can get two doses of the COVID vaccine. They can book an appointment through the [National Booking Service](#) and walk in centres are available.

Students aged 12 to 15 years

Young people aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, following advice from JCVI. Parents of children aged 12-15 that have not yet had their first vaccine can book their child's first vaccination slot over the winter break via the [National Booking Service](#). Booking for the second dose will open on Monday 20th December.

We understand that 12 to 15 year olds will be able to receive COVID-19 vaccinations in school next term, as well as having the option to receive the vaccine out of school, such as through vaccination centres, but we don't have any further information on this at this stage.

Staff Changes

On Friday we said goodbye to a couple of members of staff colleagues leaving The Corsham School. For those leaving for roles in other schools, or welcoming retirement, or moving into new challenges, I feel particularly indebted to them both for their contribution to the education of our students at a time when circumstances could not have been more challenging. I wish them all the very best for the future and hope they will carry with them very fond memories of their time working here with our wonderful students and staff colleagues.

Staff leaving us for new beginnings are:

Sarah Dustan (Social Sciences)

Natasha Dorman (Art Maternity Cover)

New and returning staff members joining us/who have already joined us for January 2022 are:

Rachael Sloan – Teacher of Art & CTL for Visual Arts & DT

Shilvanti Mahmood – Teacher of Science

Eva Jefferies – Careers Advisor

Andrea Fox – Science Technician

Year 8-13 Changed Tutor Group Arrangements from January:

10B1 - Ms Sloan replaces Ms Dorman

11F1 - Mrs Rolfe replaces Ms Dustan

Term Dates 2022/23

I thought it would be useful to remind you that the 2022/23 Term Dates/school holidays and Teacher Development Days have now been set and can be found on our website via:

<http://www.corsham.wilts.sch.uk/Term-Dates>

Wiltshire Public Health information - Play your part over Christmas

The number of cases in Wiltshire continues to be around the national average but we know that the media is reporting rates are on the increase this week:



So, please continue to wear a mask in enclosed indoor spaces; wash or sanitise hands regularly; isolate and book a PCR test if you have any COVID-19 symptoms; getting the vaccine when offered; and taking regular lateral flow tests to help break transmission.

Thanks for your support.



Thank you and Merry Christmas

Merry Christmas! We have made it to the end of a tumultuous 2021. We have seen many successes, not least in the start that our newest students have made in Year 7 and the Sixth Form. We have been so impressed by the kindness, curiosity and determination of our students of all ages: they have remained focused on the task in hand, despite the continued disruption of the pandemic.

The ongoing situation with COVID-19 has impacted our staff, as well as our students and their families. Colleagues have worked exceptionally hard to minimise disruption to the continuity of teaching and tutoring through a period of higher-than-usual staff absence. This has added pressure and work to an already busy job for those remaining in school. We hope that the push for booster jabs, and the control measures in school, will mean a more settled period in the new year, but only time will tell. In the meantime, we want to thank our students for their consistent work ethic and approach – even when they don't have their usual teacher – and families for your understanding.

More immediately, of course, we are looking forward to a well-deserved festive break. After the year we've had, our students deserve some time to rest, recharge and recover – and our staff desperately need it too!

We know 2022 is going to present more challenges. Like you, we want the very best for your children and together we will continue to do our best to make this aspiration a reality.

I will close by thanking you all, again, for your support of us this year. It has meant so much to us to receive so many positive messages from families, and to feel that sense of community and common purpose that binds us all together in the best interests of the young people we serve.

I wish you all a merry Christmas, and a happy new year and hope you are able to celebrate it with those you love.



Look after yourselves and those around you.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Rod Bell".

Rod Bell
Headteacher