

February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

As per the government's announcement on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, we are delighted that all students are able to return to school the week beginning Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> March.

As you are aware, we have robust procedures in place to mitigate the risk of transmission and to ensure your child's education can continue successfully, and alongside this, we are now also able to offer rapid testing to all students on their return.

Within school we have an existing rapid testing facility which has been in effective operation since January 2021 for all staff and students working in school. Over this time, asymptomatic testing has become an established process within school with staff and students tested twice weekly. On the return of all students, we have requested parental consent in order to offer testing to all students. Consent forms can be found on the homepage of our school website [www.winterhill.org.uk](http://www.winterhill.org.uk) and also attached to the email alongside this letter. They should be returned to: [parentalconsent@winterhill.org.uk](mailto:parentalconsent@winterhill.org.uk) by Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> March. **I would strongly recommend that you provide this consent in order to help protect the school community.**

We will be testing all students who wish to participate following the timeline below. This timeline outlines the date and time for **first in school test**. After the initial negative test result, all subsequent tests will be carried out within the school day when students have returned to normal lessons. Please click the link on our website: '[Parents' Guide to Rapid Testing](#)', to read an instructional leaflet with information regarding the process of rapid testing. I have also attached '[FAQs on Asymptomatic Testing in Schools March 2021](#)' which clarifies the full testing process.

All students who have consented to testing will take **three tests** within school. Following this, testing will move to **home testing kits** which will be provided by school.

| Date                            | Year Group and Group Tutor Time Slot  | Details of testing  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Friday<br>5 <sup>th</sup> March | <b>Year 11</b> (Test 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:15-10:00 (11 A-C)</li> <li>10:00-10:45 (11 D-F)</li> <li>10:45-11:30 (11 G-J)</li> <li>11:30- 12:15 (11K-N)</li> </ul> <b>Year 10</b> (Test 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12:15-1:00 (10 A-D)</li> <li>1:00-1:45 (10 E-I)</li> <li>1:45-2:30 (10 J-N)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student should enter the school site via the main school gate - staff will be available to direct them to the testing facility in the Network Auditorium.</li> <li>Students must arrive <b>during their designated time slot only</b> - in line with their tutor group.</li> <li>Once the test has been completed, <b>students are to leave the school site.</b></li> <li>Face masks must be worn at all times.</li> <li>Please ensure consent forms have been emailed to: <a href="mailto:parentalconsent@winterhill.org.uk">parentalconsent@winterhill.org.uk</a> prior to arriving for the test.</li> </ul> |
| Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March    | <b>Year 8</b> (Test 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:15-10 (8 A-D)</li> <li>10:00-10:45 (8 E-I)</li> <li>10:45-11:30 (8 J-N)</li> </ul> <b>Year 9</b> (Test 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11:30- 12:15 (9 A-D)</li> <li>12:15-1:00 (10 E-I)</li> <li>1:00 – 1:45 (9 J-L)</li> </ul>                                    |   |

|                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March</b> | <b>Year 7 (Test 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9:15-10 (7 A-D)</li> <li>• 10:00-10:45 (7 E-I)</li> <li>• 10:45-11:30 (7 J-M)</li> </ul> |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|

**Once students receive their first negative test, they can return to school on their designated return date which is outlined below.** Until their return date, Google Classroom lessons will continue to be available.

| Return Date                      | Year Group | Details of Return (usual school entrance) |
|----------------------------------|------------|---|
| Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> March     | Year 11    | <b>8:45am – Main Gate</b>                 |
|                                  | Year 10    | <b>8:45am – Zebra crossing gate</b>       |
| Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> March    | Year 9     | <b>8:45am – Main Gate</b>                 |
|                                  | Year 8     | <b>8:45am – Little Common Lane</b>        |
| Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March | Year 7     | <b>8:45am – Little Common Lane</b>        |

The school will operate as it did in the Autumn term, following our strict measures of control:

- Students to enter the school site via their usual separate entrance;
- All breaks / lunchtimes to be staggered with separate venues for each year group bubble;
- Front faced teaching in all lessons;
- Continuation of enhanced cleaning and hygiene protocols across school;

Alongside these existing measures, the government announced that **face coverings will be compulsory in all areas of school, including classrooms**. Therefore, please can you ensure your child has their face covering with them **at all times. Their face covering must be on as they enter the school site**, unless they are medically exempt, as per the government guidelines. Students will **not** be expected to wear a face covering when they are eating/drinking or when taking part in certain activities such as PE. Transparent face coverings e.g. a face shield, should not be worn as per updated government guidance. Face coverings should be plain and/or medical style masks without logos.

Please see our risk assessment via the school website, which has been updated in line with this new guidance.

Students should arrive at **8:45am** on their designated return day, through their normal school entrance, in **full school uniform**, including their **face covering and equipment**, and go straight to their group tutor room.

We look forward to welcoming all our students back to school, and we would like to extend our thanks to parents, carers and families for your continued support throughout the national restrictions and remote learning.

Yours faithfully,



Mr S Rhodes

Headteacher

## FAQs Asymptomatic Testing in Schools March 2021

Those students 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 18s, staff can 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/carers or legal guardians will also be informed.

Government advice suggests that these tests work - in validated 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 also read the information below which will answer some of the questions you will undoubtedly have:

### Reporting your test results:

When a test is administered at school, all results will be inputted by the trained staff within the facility. When a test is administered at home, students must report their results to NHS Test and Trace following the instructions within the home test kit.

### What if a student tests positive in school?

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

**Students won't need to take a further 'PCR test' if the lateral flow test has been administered in school, however, they must follow the government guidelines on self-isolation.**

### What if a student tests positive when using a home testing kit?

If a lateral flow test was administered at home and shows a positive result, school must be informed immediately of the positive result and a full PCR test will need to be taken. During this time, while they wait for the PCR result (via text / email), they will need to self-isolate as per the stay at home guidance. If the PCR test returns a positive result, they will have to continue to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace. However, if the PCR test shows a negative result, they can return to school as normal.

### What happens if the test is negative at school or home?

They will be able to stay in school and return to their lessons 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 need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines.

### 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 <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Of course, we will support our staff and students throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. You can call the school on 01709 740232 or email [admin@winterhill.org.uk](mailto:admin@winterhill.org.uk).