



## THE BISHOP OF HEREFORD'S BLUECOAT SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr Martin Henton

MNH/AHW  
25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, a huge thankyou to everyone who has provided us with consent for Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) for your child. This will make a huge difference in enabling us to make the school as safe as possible as students return to school by identifying any students who are asymptomatic.

Since I last wrote to you, the Department for Education has since updated their guidance to schools which enables us to start COVID LFT for students from next week. This will enable us to open the school to all students from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March immediately into a full timetable of lessons, instead of a phased start as I previously explained. I am really pleased to be able to write to you with this news which is our preferred option to speed up our return to school and learning.

The other significant change in our return to school as outlined by the Prime Minister is the wearing of face masks both in communal areas and in classrooms. This has been outlined as a temporary measure which will be reviewed by the government at Easter. We will be supporting this measure in school, as although the numbers of COVID cases are falling because of the measures associated with lockdown, the COVID virus in its variant forms is still very much in circulation. In the autumn term, despite the measures put in place in schools, infection rates in schools nationally increased significantly. To avoid this happening again, it is important that additional measures are implemented initially to avoid further spikes of infection rates.

We will be bringing a large number of people back into busy spaces where social distancing cannot be achieved amongst a community of people where very few have qualified to be in the groups at risk, to receive the COVID vaccination. Consequently, we must be very mindful of the precautions that we take. Following a meeting this week amongst both primary and secondary headteachers in Herefordshire, all schools have agreed to follow the guidance with regard to masks with the full backing of the Local Authority. In addition, all staff will also be wearing masks in their workspaces during the period of this temporary measure.

I fully understand that this is not an ideal circumstance for learning, and that as a temporary measure it will only be with us for a short time. I am asking you to support us with this to keep the whole school community safe. This is something which needs to be a team effort as does a wide consent for the LFTs. If you feel

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that you cannot support us with this, you will need to confirm it in writing so that we have a record of students that will not be wearing masks in school. We will also provide lanyards for students to wear so that they are easily identifiable.

As masks will need to be worn for a longer period of time, you may want to provide your child with more than one mask to wear during the day. If they are of a material type we ask that students continue to wear either a navy blue or black mask, but surgical masks will also be acceptable to wear as they are cheaper and disposable. In line with Public Health guidance, all masks will need to be brought to school and taken home in a sealable bag, and disposed of at home.

We are required to test students with consent three times with LFTs in school, before students resort to home testing. If you have not yet done so, please do consent for this testing in the SIMS App under data collection and parental consent. We are organising for two testing venues so that we can test two-year groups at a time on site. We have learned quickly and now have a lot of experience at running the LFTs on site with the staff and students that have been working on site during the lockdown.

Students with consent for the LFTs will need to be tested and receive a negative test result before they can start lessons and then have a further two LFTs, 3-5 days apart.

The LFT is voluntary, the higher proportion of students we can get tested, will contribute to a safer environment prior to them returning to school. Please talk to your child about how the test will be carried out using the detail on the school's website.

<https://www.bhbs.hereford.sch.uk/page/?title=Coronavirus+Testing+on+Site&pid=121>

We will be maintaining our year group bubble model when students return to school, so that we can continue delivering a broad and balanced curriculum of academic, practical and creative learning. Consequently, we will be inviting students into school next week in their year group bubbles with a fixed time for each form.

LFT results will be emailed to the contact address and phone number we hold in SIMS so it is really important that you check we have the right contact information for you. Our trained staff will supervise all students when taking the LFT which is very quick and easy using a swab of the nose and throat.

If the result is positive you will be contacted as quickly as possible and will need to self-isolate the household and follow the guidance from NHS test and trace. This testing programme is really important for us to identify those students who are asymptomatic and displaying no symptoms, but are infectious with COVID-19.

In the instance of a positive test, we will contact you to collect your child from the front of school.

If you consent for your child to be tested please bring your child to school on the dates and times by form groups listed below to undertake their LFT. On arrival students will queue, socially distanced, wearing masks until they receive their test. The registration process and testing may take up to half an hour to complete and then students will be free to go home again.

Please ensure that students arrive at the allocated time for their form, because of the magnitude of the testing programme we are trying to achieve, we will not be able to accommodate students at alternative times. Students do not need to wear uniform if they are coming in for testing next week. The Cock of Tupsley have generously agreed that parents/carers can park in their car park whilst waiting for your son/daughter to have their test. Please do not drive into school to drop your son/daughter off for testing as the gates will be closed and students should walk into school by entering through the pedestrian gates nearest to their testing area.

**Year 11 Monday 1st March and Thursday 4th March, they will have their 3<sup>rd</sup> test in school time**

Right hand blue gates to the sports hall.

ALS 8.30am	CLS 10.00 am	LLS 12.00pm	SLS 2.15pm
ARS 9.15am	CRS 11.15am	LRS 1.30pm	SRS 3.00pm

**Year 10 Monday 1st March and Thursday 4th March, they will have their 3<sup>rd</sup> test in school time**

Entry through left hand blue gates by humanities

ALT 8.30am	CLT 10.00 am	LLT 12.00pm	SLT 2.15pm
ART 9.15am	CRT 11.15am	LRT 1.30pm	SRT 3.00pm

**Year 9 Tuesday 2nd March and Friday 5th March, they will have their 3<sup>rd</sup> test in school time**

Entry through right hand blue gates to sports hall

ALU 8.30am	CLU 10.00 am	LLU 12.00pm	SLU 2.15pm
ARU 9.15am	CRU 11.15am	LRU 1.30pm	SRU 3.00pm

**Year 8 Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Friday 5th March, they will have their 3<sup>rd</sup> test in school time**

Entry through left hand blue gates by humanities

ALV 8.30am	CLV 10.00 am	LLV 12.00pm	SLV 2.15pm
ARV 9.15am	CRV 11.15am	LRV 1.30pm	SRV 3.00pm

**Year 7 Wednesday 3rd March – year 7 will have their second and third tests during school time**

Entry through left-hand blue gates to humanities

ALW 8.30am	CLW 9.15 am	LLW 10.30am	SLW 11.15pm
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Entry through right hand blue gates to sports hall

ARW 8.30am	CRW 9.15am	LRW 10.30am	SRW 11.15pm
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Online lessons will still continue next week, but staff will be aware that students will miss the lessons they are in school to receive their LFTs.

In light of the mass testing that has to be undertaken if you currently have a key worker place and feel that you could manage your child at home during the next week beginning from 1st March, it would help us greatly to staff the mass testing procedure.

I hope this information helps and explains clearly what we are trying to achieve in starting students face to face learning all together on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, rather than a phased return of students.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Henton  
(Headteacher)