



## THE BISHOP OF HEREFORD'S BLUECOAT SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mr Martin Henton

MNH/AHW  
5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As we look forward to welcoming all students and staff back into school next week for a full return on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, I would like to pay a huge tribute to how well parents/carers have supported students during this lockdown period. We fully understand what a challenge this has been for families and are delighted at the levels of engagement from students which will enable them to be ready to learn from Monday. I have attached the outcomes from both the parent and student surveys for you to read relating to the time of virtual learning.

In addition, we are very grateful for your support in our ambitious Lateral Flow Test (LFT) programme this week which has enabled a swift and full return to school on Monday next week. Students have gone about this with a positive attitude and conducted themselves in a very mature and sensible way that deserves full credit to them.

We have been delighted with the high percentage consent for the LFT which is 88%, this has enabled us to open the school with confidence for a safe start. As soon as we have further details about how testing will be conducted at home following the initial three tests carried out at school, we will share this with you.

Please see further detail regarding testing information as a separate addendum at the end of this letter.

It is also important to recognise the phenomenal effort from all staff members over the last months. We have regularly had over 70 students on site each day supervised ably by our cover supervisors. Teachers have worked exceptionally long hours to ensure the remote learning was smooth, teaching assistants have been supporting students 1:1 and the administrative teams have worked tirelessly to ensure our school has run smoothly and all students have had access to the resources required to engage with the learning. With effectively two school systems running concurrently staffing has been stretched to the limits and the undertaking of over 2000 lateral flow tests in a week has also tested our staffing capacity.

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Remote learning will continue 'as normal' until Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March with staff and students continuing to follow our usual curriculum. From Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March learning in school will build on prior learning that has been completed at home.

All students will return to school on the Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March. The government is clear that school is mandatory for all children. All the revised routines and procedures that were in place for the Autumn term to include year group bubbles and regular sanitising of classrooms will remain in place. Students are expected to wear our usual high standards of school uniform. In addition to this you will have seen in my previous correspondence that the expectation is that students and staff wear masks in lessons. Although, there may be different views on this, we have been advised by the Department for Education to follow this guidance to reduce viral transmission. The current lockdown arrangements have had a positive impact on reducing viral related statistics, but one thing that is a fact, is that the virus in its variant forms is still prevalent, has not gone away and is still in Herefordshire. I ask for your support in everything that we do, in protecting both students and staff as we bring back a large community of people, very few of which have received a COVID vaccination into conditions where social distancing isn't possible during most parts of the day. I am confident that the safety measures that we have introduced, including regular LFT for the majority or the wearing of masks will be effective in minimising viral transmission if it enters our community. We are anticipating that the wearing of masks will be a temporary measure and is being reviewed by the government at Easter. For students who we have received permission for not to wear masks, we will provide them with a yellow lanyard to wear so that staff will know and not challenge them over this whether in lessons or in the corridors.

I would like to remind you that in the event of a positive case of COVID in the household, please follow NHS guidance and to self-isolate for 10 days. The school must be informed of positive cases by contacting [head@bhbs.hereford.sch.uk](mailto:head@bhbs.hereford.sch.uk). If we do experience positive cases of COVID in school, we will be able to act swiftly in identifying close contacts who will need to self-isolate and of course keep you informed of any cases that we experience.

I am really pleased to report to you that the PSFA have started fund raising towards out outside spaces and I am delighted so many parents/carers have already contributed to this. If you are able to donate any amount please do follow the link from the PSFA. <https://gofund.me/8afd5f8e>

There are a few housekeeping updates for next week:

- Could we please ask that those students who have borrowed laptops from school should return them to IT services on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March as a large amount of work is needed to return them for use in school.
- We will resume extra-curricular activities from 15<sup>th</sup> March.
- The school canteen will resume its usual services of both hot and cold food.

- Full uniform is expected, and students should come to school smartly dressed from Monday, prepared for their timetabled lessons.
- We will still be running our year group bubble model, so students will need to arrive on Monday and go to their normal year group zone area.
- Please ensure that students are fully prepared with all equipment for lessons as we cannot share school equipment in any subjects.
- We will soon share more information with you regarding how GCSE grades will be awarded based on school assessments year, please watch this space.
- A reminder that if a student is accompanied to the school setting only one parent/carer can attend.
- Parents/carers unfortunately cannot enter the school site unless a pre-arranged appointment had been made.
- I have attached the outcomes of both the recent parent and student surveys for you to read.

Kind regards,



Martin Henton  
(Headteacher)

## Testing Information

Students will be tested in school three times before we provide kits for students to be tested at home. We are only able to provide tests for students in the school. However, NHS Test and Trace announced earlier this week, that **all adults** in households with school and college age children without symptoms can now access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This means that parents/carers are entitled to access testing kits for themselves, which will also offer another layer of protection for our community.

Test kits can either be collected or ordered online, as set out below. The school will not be able to give test kits to parents, carers or household members. Currently we are awaiting delivery of our home student testing kits and will inform you when we have these available.

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are [different ways](#) for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm. They can be ordered by phoning 119.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible.

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