

NEWLAND SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Cottingham Road, Kingston Upon Hull, HU6 7RU
Tel: 01482 343098 Fax: 01482 441416 E-mail: nsg_admin@thrivetrust.uk
www.newlandschool.co.uk
PRIDE ASPIRE EXCELLENCE



Headteacher: Vicky Callaghan

25th February 2022

Dear Parent or Carer

I hope that you have all had a relaxing and enjoyable half term break. I am writing to confirm the changes which will be in place on our return to school.

Although we are now in the phase of 'learning to live with COVID' we know that any removal of measures to reduce transmission will result in an increase in cases. It is likely that we will see this in the coming weeks at Newland and therefore it is really important we ensure that the measures which are in place are followed. We will, in all instances, follow the guidance of the Department for Education and local Public Health to prioritise face to face education and keep our Newland family safe.

We return to school on **Monday, February 28th at 8.40am.**

Onsite Testing and Twice Weekly Lateral Flow Tests

There will be no onsite testing on return this half term. Although no onsite testing is taking place, we strongly encourage all of our students and staff to complete a Lateral Flow Test before their return to school on Monday. This has been incredibly successful on the return each half term and has significantly reduced the number of positive cases in school.

There is now no asymptomatic twice weekly lateral flow testing, from 21 February, in mainstream secondary schools. This will however return should we have an outbreak of COVID within school. This does not mean that if you experience symptoms you should not test; we will continue to offer a lateral flow test to those students at school who present with COVID symptoms and ask that if your child experiences symptoms then they have a lateral flow test at home prior to allowing your child to come to school. Lateral flow test kits are still available at Pharmacies or online. PCR tests are still advised to confirm COVID.

What to do if you test positive for COVID

If you have COVID-19 you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Students with COVID-19 should not attend school while they are infectious. Remote learning via lessons on google classrooms will be provided for all students if they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are well enough to learn from home.

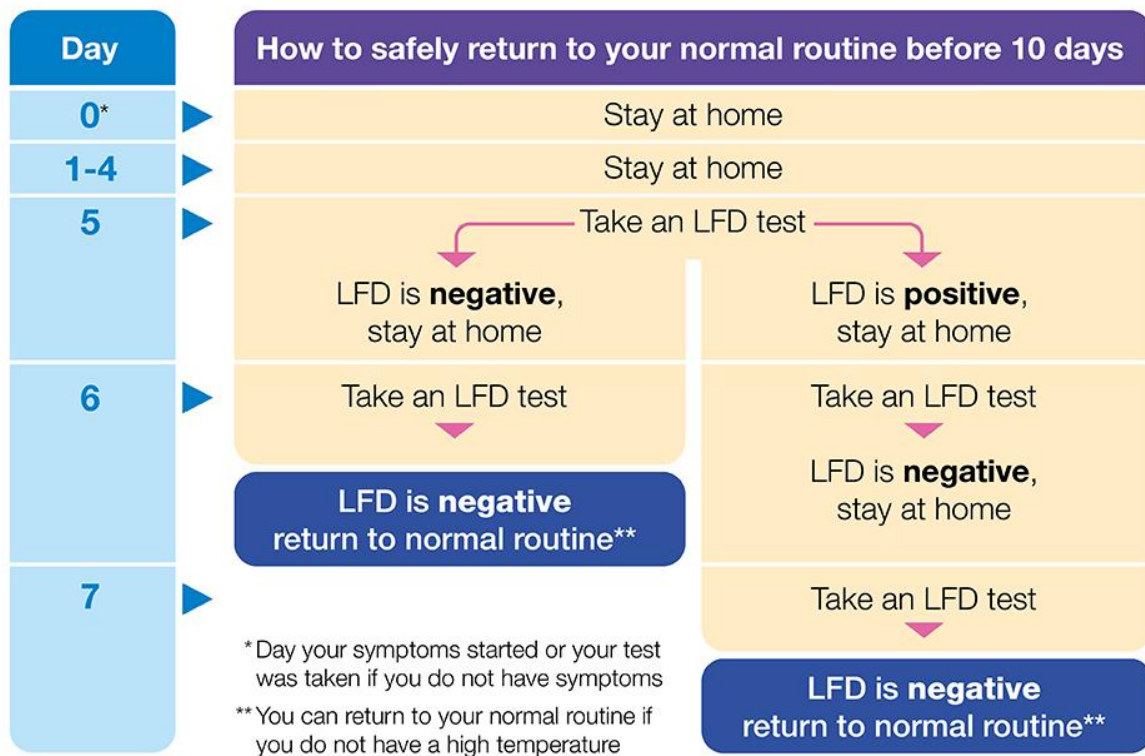
Before return to school your child should take a lateral flow test from 5 days after their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another one the next day. If both these tests results are negative, they can return to school, as long as they feel well enough to do so and do not have a temperature. We will require a picture of the lateral flow test on day 5 and a picture of the test on day 6, clearly indicating your child is no longer symptomatic before their return to school.



SCHOOL
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How to safely return to your normal routine before 10 days



If students return to school before the 10 days they should avoid meeting people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, especially those with a severely weakened immune system, for the 10 days after your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you did not have symptoms).

Close Contacts

Public health advice for people with COVID-19 and their contacts changed from 24 February. Contacts are no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests, and contact tracing has ended. Please see advice towards the bottom of the letter for household contacts, in these cases we would still recommend some daily lateral flow testing to reduce transmission to others in school.

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing has ended and therefore we will no longer routinely inform you of positive cases, unless we have an outbreak at which point we will return to the 'inform' letters we have been sending this academic year.

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors in classrooms or communal areas. However, the government suggests that we continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you may come into contact with people they do not normally meet and this would mean we continue to recommend the wearing of face masks on the school buses.

Students or staff may continue to choose to wear face coverings in any and all spaces within school.

Control Measures which we have in place now and will remain in place

1. Good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. Staff and students should continue to clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser; there are many hand sanitiser units around school for regular use.

Respiratory hygiene The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. Tissues are provided in every classroom and should be used to catch sneezes and coughs.

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE) will be available for all first aid staff who may come into contact with positive cases

2. **Maintain cleaning regimes** and more often on frequently touched surfaces, we have additional daytime cleaning staff to ensure this for the safety of all.

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

Ventilation in the classroom - windows and classroom doors should remain open to allow for the flow of air. Monitors provided by the government show classrooms are safe when ventilated, without ventilation they would not be safe to teach in. *Students will still be able to wear an additional plain black jumper for this half term. This is in addition to their full school uniform and does not include jumpers or hoodies of any other color or with logo's.*

Ventilation of the school bus - windows and ceiling vents should be open to let fresh air into vehicles when occupied to reduce the risk of transmission.

4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

What should household close contacts of a positive person do

While you are infectious there is a high risk of passing on COVID-19 to others in your household. These are simple things you can do to help prevent the spread:

- keep your distance from other people you live with and spend as little time as possible in shared areas such as kitchens and living rooms.
- if you need to spend time in shared areas wear a well-fitting [face covering](#) made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask. Ventilate the room by opening windows and leaving them open for at least 10 minutes after you have left the room. Leave extractor fans running for longer than usual with the door closed after use
- cover your mouth and nose with disposable tissues when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a rubbish bag and immediately wash your hands or use hand sanitiser
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser after coughing, sneezing and blowing your nose and before you eat or handle food. Avoid touching your face
- if you can, use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household. If this is not possible try and use the bathroom after everyone else
- regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles and remote controls, and shared areas such as kitchens and bathrooms

[GermDefence](#) is a useful website that can help you identify ways to protect yourself and others in your household from COVID-19. It provides scientifically proven advice on reducing the risks from COVID-19 and other viruses in your home.

What will happen if there is an outbreak in school?

Should there be an outbreak of cases in school, then we will enact our Outbreak Management Plan, which in the first instance will see the return of face masks for all in all spaces and then depending

on severity, no mixing of year groups and a revert to separate classrooms, breaks and lunches and the possibility of home learning remotely for one or more year groups; vulnerable pupils and Y11 will receive prioritisation for face to face teaching.

Remote learning via lessons on google classrooms will be provided for all students if:

- they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are well enough to learn from home
- attendance at school has been temporarily restricted due to an outbreak

As we start to remove the measures we have had in place for nearly two years it can feel scary and uncharted. Living with COVID can mean different things for different people, some people are or live with family members who are clinically extremely vulnerable and we should be respectful of decisions made by individuals to remain wearing a face mask and also to ask for social distance when speaking to someone. This will apply to staff and students and I expect the whole of the Newland community to be respectful and understanding of this.

As a school community we have been incredibly compliant with the measures in place and I truly believe this has helped to keep our transmission rates so low throughout the whole pandemic. COVID is still very much with us and therefore acting as if it is not, is just asking for trouble. Going back to normal is no longer possible, but achieving a new normal with a healthy balance of social distance, face coverings when needed, ventilation and good hygiene does mean we should be able to remain in school for face to face education and have healthy staff and students in school.

Yours sincerely



V Callaghan
Headteacher