

28 February 2021



Holderness Academy
& Sixth Form College

Dear Parent/Carer

As you will be aware, the Government reaffirmed their intention for schools to open fully for all children from 8 March 2021. I am delighted to confirm that we will be open to all students during that week. However, we will be offering all students the opportunity to undertake a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test before returning to school.

This letter sets out the arrangements for both student testing and their return to school. Please do read it carefully.

Lateral Flow Device Testing

Students will be offered their first LFD Test (Test 1) on the following days:

Friday 5 March - Years 11, 12 and 13

Monday 8 March - Years 10 and 8

Tuesday 9 March - Years 7 and 9

Please note these are testing days only. Students will attend for their appointment time and then return home. Vulnerable children and children of critical workers should continue to attend school throughout, where the arrangement for them to attend is already in place, unless they receive a positive test result.

Return to School

All Students will return to school on Wednesday 10 March at 8.30am. Please note that whilst work will be set, there will be no live lessons on Monday 8 or Tuesday 9 March.

Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing

The Government has asked schools to provide all students with a LFD test before they return to lessons. There are significant logistical challenges involved with doing this which would have the potential to disrupt the safe and orderly return of students to classrooms.

After eleven weeks away from school, we strongly believe that it is vital that students have a well-structured return to school without the distraction of undertaking a LFD test, probably for the first time.

For that reason, we have decided to offer the first LFD test to students on the dates shown above. Students will only come into school for the test and, after they have had their test, they will go home again.

Please see previous correspondence for further LFD information.

Testing is voluntary and no student will be put under any pressure to undertake a test. Students who do not undertake a test will still return to school on Wednesday 10 March.

Explorer • Scholar • Leader • Collaborator



Please look out for further information regarding test appointment times on early next week. We expect that the whole process from a student arriving on site to leaving will take no more than 15-20 minutes. You will need to complete a test consent form prior to booking a slot if you have not already done so. A link to provide consent has been shared with all parents via email, however please contact us if you would like this to be resent. Please also see the attached Privacy Statement.

We strongly recommend that students seek to be tested before returning to school.

Tests 2 and 3

Following the first test, students for whom we have obtained consent will then be offered two further tests three to five days apart. Students will already be in school by then, so we will arrange a suitable time for the students to leave their lessons briefly to be tested. After three in-school tests, the Government is then asking that students continue to test twice weekly using home testing kits which we will distribute in due course. We will also provide you with information on how to carry out these tests and how to record results. Once again, all testing is voluntary and students can continue to attend school without doing tests.

Return to School

After eleven weeks away from school, it is vital for students that they return in a safe and orderly way and we look forward to welcoming them. When students arrive on their first day back, they will begin with an extended tutor period which will allow them time to settle back in, reacquaint themselves with their peers, check their timetable and uniform and to have a welcome conversation with their tutor. They will also see an assembly which will outline the prevailing Covid-19 safety measures in place in school.

The main change to our safety measures is that, until Easter, based on Government guidance, we will expect all students to wear a face covering indoors, including in classrooms. We will keep this situation under constant review.

If your child has previously carried an exemption card, we would ask that you also contact the school to update us on whether this is still required. Once your child is due to return to school, attendance is compulsory.

During the next few days, I will be in regular contact with parents and students providing you with all the information that the students will need in order to make a smooth readjustment back to day-to-day school life. Please take the time to read the messages as they arrive and, if we have missed anything or you have specific concerns regarding your child, please contact us.

The remainder of this letter consists of some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Once again, may I thank you all for your support.

Yours faithfully,



Scott Wilson
Headteacher

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

When will my child return to school?

All students will return to lessons during the week commencing 8 March. The Department for Education has stated that all students must be offered a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test before returning to class, followed by two further tests. This presents a significant challenge to administer over 3000 tests whilst also welcoming students back to school after a lengthy break. For that reason, we are introducing testing days before the full return. The first testing date for each year group is shown at the top of the letter attached to this document.

Does my child have to be tested?

No, testing is voluntary. We would, however, encourage parents to give consent to students being tested so that you are aware if you have unidentified cases of Coronavirus not only circulating in school but also within your own family and in the community.

If I do not consent to my child being tested, will he or she still be allowed to return to school?

Yes.

Will I be told the result of the test?

We will only notify you if your child's result is positive. The LFD test takes around 30 minutes to process so, if you have not heard from us soon after that time has expired, you may presume that the test is negative. If a test is positive, we will not leave a message and will ensure we reach you to inform you.

The result, positive or negative, may be sent to the contact number you have provided on the consent form via SMS text message by NHS Test & Trace

What happens if my child tests positive?

The student should be collected by a member of their family or household. The student will be expected to self-isolate for 10 days, along with everyone else in the household.

Who is conducting the tests and have they been properly trained?

The test is a very simple procedure; students will swab themselves under the supervision of a trained adult, led by senior staff who monitor the quality and hygiene of the process. The test is then processed and the result recorded.

Our Trust has also appointed a full-time Testing Lead with clinical experience who is responsible for the entire process. All testing is done in our Main Hall which is cleaned throughout the day.

Will the children only be tested once?

No. If you have provided consent, there will be three LFD tests carried out in school at intervals of 3-5 days. The second and third tests will be carried out during the school day whilst students are already in school.

What happens after that? Are they to be tested at home?

Once students have carried out three tests in school, you will be provided with a set of home testing kits to be used by the students at home. The results of these tests will need to be uploaded to NHS Test and Trace and, if

the result is positive, the school informed. We are still awaiting more detailed guidance on this aspect of the testing programme and we will contact you again with more information in due course. We do not anticipate that this will begin before Monday 15 March.

Will my child have to wear a face covering in school?

Yes. Students will be required to wear a face covering indoors, including classrooms. We understand that the requirement to wear a face covering in a classroom may only apply until Easter (i.e., approximately three weeks after the students return to school). Face coverings should be those that cover the nose and mouth and not a face shield.

We want to ensure that teaching staff can communicate clearly in lessons, particularly where a young person may have difficulty hearing. Therefore, we will continue our approach from the autumn term where most classrooms will have a designated teaching zone where the teacher can remain 2m from students. This means teachers will generally not be required to cover their faces in lessons, except when they move out of their teaching zone.

What if my child has a medical condition, such as asthma? Can he/she be exempt?

The Government guidance states that there can be exemptions for students with legitimate medical conditions. If this is the case, please contact the school on covid@holderness.academy

Can consent be withdrawn after it has been provided?

Yes. To do this please send an email from the email address you have provided consent from to covid@holderness.academy with your child's full name, Year group and date of birth, along with your name and a contact telephone number, should we need to contact you. Please note that no student will be tested if in doing so this causes undue anxiety or upset.