

3 March 2021

Dear #TeamBRIGHTstowe parents and carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well.

Unfortunately, we have had to make a significant change to our plan for how your children will return to the academy site from next Monday onwards.

As you will know, the Department for Education is requiring schools to arrange COVID-19 tests for students upon their return to school sites, subject to their parents or carers giving consent. The DFE guidance states that a student cannot be in any lessons or other formal activities until they have had their test and it has shown a negative result. It takes at least 30 minutes for the test result to be confirmed.

As we have worked through our plans, it has become clear that we will not be able to carry out the tests and keep students 'quarantined' until their test result is confirmed. This is due to the particular layout of our building and the need to maintain all of our other COVID safety measures.

Your children will therefore be returning to the academy site as follows:

Monday 8th March	Year 11 attend for COVID test only (appointment times to follow)
Tuesday 9th March	Year 11 attend for full school day as normal from today onwards Year 10 attend for COVID test only (appointment times to follow)
Weds 10th March	Year 10 attend for full school day as normal from today onwards Year 7 attend for COVID test only (appointment times to follow)
Thurs 11th March	Year 7 attend for full school day as normal from today onwards Year 8 attend for COVID test only (appointment times to follow)
Friday 12th March	Year 8 attend for full school day as normal from today onwards Year 9 attend for COVID test only (appointment times to follow)
Monday 15th March	Year 9 attend for full school day as normal from today onwards

Please note that students who attend our critical worker provision should continue to come to the academy every day.

I would like to apologise to each of you personally for having to change our plan at such short notice. Throughout the pandemic, I have tried to make sure that we only give you information that is certain. On this occasion, I fell short of that standard.

We will be communicating with you tomorrow (Thursday) about arrangements for your child's COVID-19 testing, please see the information below (also highlighted) which we sent to you a while ago regarding how you can give consent for your child to be tested.

If you have not signed up to the MCAS (My child at school app) please do. However you can email us at hello@oasisbrightstowe.org or ring reception 0117 316 7330 to let us know urgently if you give consent for your child to have lateral flow testing. Parents who have already given consent do not need to worry as this would have been recorded. I will write to you on Friday with full information about all of our arrangements.

Thank you for your continued support.

Stay safe and #ShineBRIGHT,



Alan Dane
Principal

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Information about Lateral Flow Testing upon Return to School

We are asking for your permission for your child to be tested for coronavirus when before they come back to the Academy, in line with the government guidance mentioned in the Principal's letter above.

The government has asked secondary schools to offer Covid-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests,' that provide a result within half an hour. Up to a third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms, so by introducing this test, we will improve our ability to stop the virus from spreading within school, and help everyone to feel safer and more secure.

As you know, we have implemented lots of protective measures at the Academy to reduce the risk of Covid-19, and we welcome these tests as an additional protective measure that will help keep everyone safe.

The tests are quick and safe and will help us to identify if anyone has the coronavirus as early as possible. Please see [the leaflet online here](#) also attached to see how easy it is for your young person to take the test.

What do I need to do now?

1. Please read the accompanying NHS Test and Trace leaflet called 'How to do your test' and share this with your child to explain what will happen.
2. Please read the additional information on 'How will our process work?' at the end of this letter for more details on how we will handle different situations so you are fully informed.
3. Please read the information attached on consent and privacy or visit <https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/covid> to read the information on our website.
4. If, once you have read all the information, you would like to give your permission for your child to be tested and your consent for us to handle the information around the results, **please give your consent using 'My Child At School'. This is the quickest and easiest way to give consent, and you can also easily withdraw it at any time.**
 - Open the My Child At School app (or log into the website).
 - Go to the parental consent section
 - Click the slider to green to grant consent.

You can find copies of all of the important information including the full consent form in the Important Documents Section.

We will be testing all students who are on site and have your consent to participate from next week. **Please ensure that you have given consent by the end of this week, so that we may give them a test next week.**

We are urging all families to agree to this safe and quick test for pupils when they are in school. If you do not give your permission, your child will attend school as normal and continue to follow all other safety precautions. Should they come into contact with a confirmed case, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you need this information in any other language or format or if you have any questions. Please contact us by email on hello@oasisbrightstowe.org

How will our process work?

- All secondary students with parental consent will be tested as they return to the Academy, beginning next week.
- Those 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.
- Results will be shared directly with you from the NHS 'test and trace' service and in the case of a positive test, we will call you as soon as we have the result (which takes approximately half an hour to come through after the test is done).
- Should a student receive a positive test, they will need to take a 'PCR test' (usually done in local testing sites) on the same day. You should call 119 to book this follow-up test. Once they have had this PCR test, they will need to self-isolate while they await the result. If the PCR test returns as 'positive', they will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.
- Should a student or staff member receive a negative test, they will be able to come back to school and resume their activities 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 may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason, and we will call you ask the pupil to return for another test.
- Studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, show that the tests are accurate in identifying a case. The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load.

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

Pupils will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. Further details will be provided at the time.

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