



BIRKENHEAD HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Dear parents and carers

24th February 2021

I am looking forward to welcoming all students back into school in the week beginning the 8th March. This letter gives you information about how this will work for the Senior School. The government guidance states that children should return to face to face education following their first negative lateral flow test result, which will be undertaken at school at our testing centre and **your daughter/ward will be sent an appointment for this test in a separate letter**. These tests are voluntary and you will need to provide your consent via this Google form link.

<https://forms.gle/EHUX5YYxNfvkEDfe7>

Please also see link below for GDST privacy statement for Covid-19 testing:

<https://www.gdst.net/about-us/covid-19-testing-privacy-statement>

In order to be able to undertake the necessary registration and administration required **it is vital that these forms are submitted to us by Tuesday 2nd March**. All of our staff and the vast majority of our critical worker/vulnerable students in school have been taking these tests since January and it helps provide an extra level of security in detecting asymptomatic cases, therefore I would urge you to allow your daughter/ward to take part in this programme. I am sure many of you already are part of such schemes at your work places.

Appointments for this initial test will be allocated between the 8th and 10th March. These will be in small groups and will be for a maximum of 30 minutes. To ensure everyone's safety your daughter/ward will only come in to school at her allocated time and then be expected to go straight home afterwards, not mix with other students and continue with her guided home learning. Teachers will be aware of who needs to be absent from guided home learning for these tests and make sure no work is missed. From 11th March all students will be in school all of the time. Please see the table below for more details. **This system of testing has been discussed with Wirral Public Health and approved as a model of safe practice**. We will also be offering two more tests in school before moving to home testing.

	Monday 8th	Tuesday 9th	Wednesday 10th	Thursday 11th
YEAR 7	Home	Home	Test	School
YEAR 8	Home	Home	Test	School
YEAR 9	Home	Test	School	School
YEAR 10	Home	Test	School	School
YEAR 11	Test	School	School	School (Test 2)
YEARS12/13	Test	School	School	School (Test 2)

Birkenhead High School Academy

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Appointments will be allocated from 9am on the allocated test day and in alphabetical order. Students must be socially distanced at all times (at least 2 metres apart) and be wearing a face covering. Students will use the main entrance for access to our testing centre and then on subsequent days when back in school, go back to their usual zone entry points from the autumn term. You will be notified of their test results later that day and if they are negative, they may start back at school the next day for face to face learning again. If they test positive, then you will be given instructions from NHS England regarding self-isolation.

If for some reason you do not consent for your daughter/ward to be tested, then she should not return to school until the "School" date as in the table above, however I would encourage you all to do so for everyone's safety.

Critical worker and vulnerable children provision will continue as normal throughout this time and they will be tested on the same days as the rest of their year groups and be collected and taken back to their critical worker year group zones afterwards.

Our test centre is based in the Heart/Theatre/mezzanine area, therefore Year 12 students will not have access to the mezzanine at any time until Friday 20th March, when we move to a home testing regime for all. From 9th March Year 12 may use any spare classrooms in their zone for private study if they are not able to travel home in between lessons.

I understand that there is a vast amount of information here for you to take in, but we will soon be back to having all the students in their lessons, which will be wonderful. After having so much time at home the girls may well be out of practice in the "Hands, Space, Face" practicalities, so please take some time to remind them of all the Covid safety rules of regular handwashing and social distancing. The new government guidance now states that face coverings, not visors, should be worn at all times indoors, where social distancing is not possible. In most secondary schools with class sizes such as ours, this means all of the time indoors. There are no changes to our school uniform/makeup/nails policy. As parents, you may also be out of practice in dropping your daughters and wards off at school. Please use the drop off area or park a good distance from school in order to respect our neighbours.

We will continue to do everything possible to support the girls' mental health and academic progress as they transition back into face to face learning. This has been an incredibly challenging time for all of our school community. All meetings for parents and visitors will need to run virtually for the foreseeable future, but following the excellent feedback from the recent virtual Year 12 parents evening, this will be a practical feature from this pandemic that we hope to continue to use.

Thank you once again for your continued support

Yours faithfully



Rebecca Mahony
Principal