

14th December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

COVID-19 Update

Following our previous communications, and recent government announcements, I wanted to send a final letter for 2021 to confirm our New Year return arrangements.

As you will have seen the new strain of COVID-19 (Omicron) is quickly becoming the dominant strain in the UK, as a result further processes / mitigations are being recommended by the Government. One of these is for schools to provide an on-site test when the pupils return in January. To facilitate this, and to keep our school community safe, we are planning a phased return in the New Year as follows:

- Year 10/11 – Return on Wednesday 5th January
- Year 8/9 – Return on Thursday 6th January
- Year 7 – Return on Friday 7th January

This will enable us to test the pupils on their first day back at GTS. School transport / catering and lessons will continue as normal for those pupils in school. For those pupils at home, during the phased return, they will access learning via Show My Homework. When pupils return, we will continue with our current processes which include masks being worn on transport and in school communal areas.

We have also distributed additional test kits this week to all pupils, to enable testing (twice weekly) to continue during the Christmas break. A further test should also be taken at home a few days after the school-based test is completed. Further test kits, if required, can be obtained via the NHS / local pharmacies:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Please see the current national guidance regarding symptoms below, if your child is presenting with any of these please do not send your child into school.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

Should your child test positive using an LFD they should remain at home, report the result to the NHS and book a confirmatory PCR test. Please can I also ask that all positive cases from LFDs, or PCRs, continue to be communicated to the school via covidcontact@gts.devon.sch.uk, even during the Christmas break.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a great Christmas and a happy New Year, stay safe and healthy.

Yours faithfully



Andy Bloodworth
Headteacher