

**Breakspeare School**

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, I would like to express our sincere thanks for your flexibility and support during the planning and organisation for school next week. We have amazing parents and carers in our schools and your ongoing support and understanding is greatly appreciated. It goes without saying that our COVID-journey would have been more difficult without the existing strong sense of mutual respect and willingness to work together. Thank you!

As the infection rate and transmission of the virus are slowly but steadily reducing, COVID-vaccination programme is well received and lateral flow testing for asymptomatic people is now widely available to identify possible COVID-cases early. We can little by little start to be more optimistic that normal school routines may be able to resume by end of this academic year.

Please find attached our updated COVID-risk assessment. The risk assessment is amended, as always, based on the DfE and PH guidance. We are grateful that we are able to resume some activities that are important for our students on-site, such as dog therapy, music therapy and to extend opportunities within the bubbles for music and PE. Access to some activities such as rebound therapy and soft play need to continue to be limited in order to manage activities within the bubbles and to maintain sufficient hygiene measures. We will continue rigorous implementation of essential protective measures such as hand hygiene, social distancing whenever possible, increased ventilation, hygiene measures and use of PPE.

If the positive trend in reducing virus transmissions continues, we will be able to resume more activities in early summer term.

Please note the following updates:

FACE-COVERINGS

- Children in primary schools do not need to wear a face covering and they are not asked to wear one.
- The secondary age students are advised to use face-coverings during transport and within school environment. Please note that the students should be able to don and doff their face-coverings themselves. The school staff is able to model and advise a student but not to put face coverings on a student.
- School staff are using IIR-masks.
- Visitors are requested to use face-coverings.

SECONDARY STUDENTS' LATERAL TESTING

We have a small number of secondary age students whose parents have requested lateral flow test kits for them. Parents of a young person is requested to support their child's first lateral test at school. Trish Poole, our phase leader working across the federation, will contact these parents in due course to agree arrangement.

FAMILIES / HOUSEHOLDS ACCESS TO LATERAL FLOW TESTING AT HOME

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus.

- Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free.

There are [different ways](#) for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, bi-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

Further information and guidance about how to access the test kits:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-testing-for-households-and-bubbles-of-school-pupils-and-staff>

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN'S TESTING

Children of primary school age (and below) without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

SECONDARY AGE STUDENT'S TESTING

Secondary school and college students will continue to access testing through their school or college.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

The current school organisation will be in place until the Easter break e.g. for the next three weeks.

- The parents of those students who are on combined schooling programme (remote and school based learning), have been contacted individually by Darren or Trish.
- Absence of the students who have a reintegration plan to school in place is authorised. Remote learning programme is provided for these students.
- We have a very small number of students whose absence will be unauthorised.
- 93% of Breakspeare and 82% of Meadow Wood students will be back either full time or in a combined schooling programme commencing 8th March.
- Vast majority of the students in both schools will be back full time; the impact of a significant number of staff shielding in three of Breakspeare classes have compromised our ability to offer all students a full time placement in these classes.

We will inform you before the Easter break about the next organisation plan for when we return from the Easter holidays.

Lastly, it is with regret to share that we have two teachers, Tasnim Ali and Natasha Maloney, leaving us at the end of the academic year due to their relocation out of Hertfordshire. They will both work on a part-time basis the latter part of the summer term. Green and Brown classes will be informed separately about the organisation in these classes after Easter. Both Tas and Natasha will be greatly missed.

We will inform the outcome of our teacher interviews shortly.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any further questions.

Thank you for your continued support.

Take care.

Be safe.

Merja