



Bexley Grammar School
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A Specialist Language College and
IB World School
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16 December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I last wrote 10 days ago with notice of the postponement of the school play, *Mermaid*, and with notice of the mass testing schools have been asked to undertake on our return in January. There follow full details of the testing (see the separate schedule attachment), some other Covid-related information (including emptying lockers tomorrow) as well as some safeguarding and online safety information. My apologies for the length of this letter - the pandemic insists!

Covid-related issues

As previously notified:

- Tuesday 4th January - Covid-testing day for students in years 7-11
(they will test and then return home - [schedule attached](#)).
- Wednesday 5th January - First day of lessons for all students
(Year 12 and 13 will test and then go to lessons - [schedule attached](#))

Additional important information:

If a student has tested positive from a PCR test within 90 days of the test dates above, they should not participate in our school testing. If in years 7-11, they should attend school as normal on Wednesday and if in the sixth form, should go to their lesson on Wednesday from the time of the testing for their form group (see attached schedule).

After 90 days have passed, students should restart routine LFD testing.

Other reminders:

Please arrive promptly for your test and enter via the Sports hall car park.

Please attend in full school uniform.

Parents/Carers will be notified only of a positive test result. If you do not receive a telephone call, please assume the test result is negative.

New arrangements for close contacts:

From Tuesday 14 December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 has been introduced. All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months (i.e. all BGS students) identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [Online Reporting System](#) and to [us at school](#). If they test negative, they can continue to attend school each day.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and order a PCR test to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests.

Lockers

If your student has a locker in school, they have been asked, as a precaution, to empty it and bring everything home. (If schools were closed in January (unlikely but possible), students would need their books at home.)

Face coverings

A number of students are still having to ask for disposable face coverings at reception regularly. If this continues in the new year, we will be contacting parents of those students. Please save us doing so if you suspect one of these students may be your child.

If your child is exempt from wearing a face covering for medical reasons and is not carrying an exempt card - please let us know on enquiries@bexleygs.co.uk so that we can furnish them with one.

Safeguarding update

If you have not looked at our [As it arrives](#) page recently, please consult it for warnings about the sale of vapes to under 18s.

I would also like to bring your attention to TikTok memes that have been trending recently. You may have seen the media coverage of schools being targeted by unsavoury or defamatory comments. Please talk to your children about the use of TikTok - if anyone is identified as posting anything inappropriate linked to BGS, they should expect a severe sanction.

Lastly, and coincidentally, the Children's Commissioner is today launching a [guide for parents and carers](#) on online sexual harassment and how they can support children to stay safe online. "The things I wish my parents had known" draws together advice from 16 to 21 year olds on how parents should manage tricky conversations around sexual harassment and access to inappropriate content, including pornography.

Lunchtime arrangements

Please be aware that the order that year groups will have lunch will rotate next term so that year groups get fair access to lunch over the course of a year. The order for the spring term will be - first lunch: 12 & 9, 7, 8; second lunch: 13 & 11, 10.

Festive fun

Finally, thank you for your support through another challenging term which felt normal for a time, at least. A number of very generous contributions of festive treats have cheered us up this week and are very much appreciated - you know who you are - thank you! Have a wonderful time with family and friends over the festive season and don't forget to drop a whiteboard marker into the stocking...

Thank you for your support.

Best wishes,



Steve Elphick

cc. Sixth form students