

22nd January 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you are well despite the current restrictions. I have been greatly impressed by our students' engagement in remote learning since Christmas. Once again, I am proud of how the academy community has adjusted to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am writing to you today with updates on some important matters.

Rapid COVID-19 Testing for Students

In recent weeks, we have been working hard to be able to offer COVID-19 'lateral flow' tests to students and staff. These tests provide a result within half an hour. Up to a third of people who have COVID-19 experience no symptoms, so by introducing testing we will improve our ability to stop the virus from spreading within school. As you know, we have implemented lots of protective measures at the Academy to reduce the risk posed by COVID-19, and we welcome these tests as an additional protective measure that will help to keep everyone safe.

I am pleased to report that we have successfully begun this programme with our staff. As such, we are now in a position to ask for your permission for your child to be tested for COVID-19 on their return to school. If your child is currently attending school as they are determined as 'vulnerable', or because you are a critical worker, they will be able to receive a test from Wednesday 27th January, provided we have received your permission. All other students will be tested upon the full reopening of the Academy, the date of which is currently unknown.

How will our process work?

- The tests are quick, easy and safe and will help us to identify if anyone has COVID-19 as early as possible. They work by using a swab of your child's nose and throat. Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff.
- Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.
- Should a student receive a positive test, they will need to take a further 'PCR' test (similar to those done in local testing sites) on the same day. Once they have had the further test, they will need to self-isolate while they await the result. If the PCR test returns a positive result they will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

Principal - Rob Forder

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- 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 result. A small number may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.
- 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, hence the need to test frequently.
- 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>.

What do I need to do now?

- Please read the NHS Test and Trace leaflet called 'How to do your test' ([the leaflet is online here](#)) and share this with your child to explain what will happen.
- Please visit <https://www.oasiscommunitylearning.org/covid> to read the information on consent and our privacy notice.
- 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, you must provide confirmation of this via My Child At School (MCAS). To do this, you should log into MCAS (www.mychildatschool.com) and go to the parental consent section. Tick the 'COVID-19 testing' box to grant consent. You can find copies of all of the important information including the full consent form in the important documents section.
- If your child is currently attending school, you should provide consent by 3.00pm on Tuesday 26th January at the latest in order to be tested the following day.

Invitation codes for MCAS were emailed to all first priority parents recently. You can find guidance on how to set up your MCAS account by clicking [here](#).

Please ensure that your contact mobile number and email address are correct in MCAS, as these are the contacts used for results to be sent to. You can advise the Academy of changes to these via the MCAS portal. You can also contact Denise Farrell by email (denise.farrell@oasislordshill.org) with any questions about accessing your MCAS account.

We are urging all families to agree to this safe and quick test when they return to school. If you do not give your permission, your child will still be able attend school as normal and continue to follow all other safety precautions.

Online Lesson Attendance Monitoring using MCAS

You can now view your child's lesson attendance to online lessons via MCAS. This is available in the attendance section. Children must attend lessons throughout the day on a suitable device at home. Attendance to these lessons is compulsory, because failure to do so will result in students missing important new learning.

Teachers complete these online registers for every lesson each day, recording which students have attended their lessons. Two codes are shown for each lesson as follows:

Code 1 – your child has attended this online lesson.

Code 2 – your child has not attended this online lesson.

As a parent, you will wish to see that your child has attended every lesson and has '1' code. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance to online lessons, please contact your child's Head of Year.

As part of our monitoring of online lesson attendance, we are now also sending a daily text message to parents of any student who has not attended their lessons. This is to ensure that students are safe, and that they do not fall behind in their learning

Please contact us by email at info@oasislordshill.org if you need this information in any other language or format, or if you have any questions.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Forder', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr Rob Forder
Principal