

The
Portsmouth Academy
26th February 2021

SAFE RETURN TO THE PORTSMOUTH ACADEMY FROM MONDAY 8TH MARCH, 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family are well.

Following the PM's announcement this week we will be welcoming all staff and students back to school grounds **from** Monday 8th March. As part of the measures to help schools open safely Government guidance requires us to offer testing for Covid for students before they return to the classroom.

Therefore, the return to school will be staggered to ensure that testing can be carried out safely and help prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our community. Testing is voluntary, however, it is important that as many students as possible take part in the Covid-testing program to minimise the chances of an outbreak of Covid in our school community in the future.

CONSENT

I would, therefore, urge you to give consent for your child to be tested – please click the link below to complete a form and give consent. There are further details about Saliva and Lateral Flow Tests below.

[Test Consent Form](#)

THE DEADLINE FOR PROVIDING CONSENT IS MONDAY 1st MARCH

If you have already given consent, please ignore

RETURNING

In order to conduct the testing safely and support student transition back into school-based learning we will be following a pattern of students coming in for testing and going home on a designated day, and then starting school-based learning the following day.

Therefore, if a student is called in for testing on Tuesday, they will only come in to take their test on that day and then start school-based learning on the Wednesday. We will continue to provide remote learning for students prior to their return to school-based learning.

Students will be given their home testing kits on their testing day, please ensure they bring a bag.

The timetable for students to be tested and return to school-based learning is as follows:



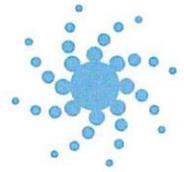
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Day / Date	Year group coming to school for testing only & then returning home.	Year groups in school for lessons
Friday 5 th March	Year 10 and Year 11	
Monday 8 th March	Year 7	Year 10 and Year 11
Tuesday 9 th March	Year 9	Year 7, Year 10 & Year 11
Wednesday 10 th March	Year 8	Year 7, Year 9, Year 10 & Year 11
Thursday 11 th March		All year groups back on site

Exact timings of testing slots to provided at a later date.

While the news of returning to school is amazing and most welcomed as we take steps back to normality, please be aware that remote learning is still very much a possibility now that fast and easy-access testing has become more widely available, leading to more self-isolation.

MAIN CHANGES

While there are many changes happening as we make the first steps to welcoming back our students, the main ones to be aware of right now are;

- Regular testing for staff and students
- Students must wear a face covering in class and communal areas.
- Our breakfast club will be available.
- Ventilation in classrooms is paramount. We will be keeping external windows and doors open where possible for air circulation, so please ensure your child has light layers to add/remove as necessary.
- Class 'bubbles' no longer exist, adults are allowed to move between classrooms and students will be part of a number of groups e.g. Breakfast club, class, after-school provision. These groups will be kept in small sizes. In the event of a positive case in a child, students in the relevant groups will be required to self-isolate for the government advised 10 days.

STILL THE SAME

The safety of our school community remains our utmost priority and as such the following guidelines, whether vaccinated or not, still apply;

- Social distancing of 2 metres where possible
- Face coverings in all communal areas
- Frequent washing and sanitising of hands

www.theportsmouthacademy.org.uk

TRANSFORMING LIFE CHANCES

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MANAGING SICKNESS AND REPORTING: Please remember that you must not send your child to school if they are unwell or displaying any symptoms of Covid-19.

- New continuous cough.
- High temperature.
- Loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Any member of our school community that is displaying symptoms must self-isolate and be tested. In the event of a positive test result, we will inform Public Health England (PHE) and require all students identified as being within prolonged close contact to the infected person to isolate for 10 days.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SCHOOL DAY

LESSONS: To reduce movement of students around the school we will be operating a **three-lesson school day.**

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE: To support social distancing students must enter and leave the school grounds through the entry / exit points outlined below:

Year	Entry / Exit point	Time
7	Back gate	8:25am
8	St Mary's gate	8:30am
9	Back gate	8:35am
10/11	St Mary's gate or Reception gate depending on building being travelled to	8:40am

At the start of the school day, Years 7-9 students should to their line up station (Year 7/9 on the Hardstanding area, Year 8 on the MUGA) and Years 10 and 11 go straight to their lesson 1 classroom.

LOCKERS: To minimise spread of the virus, lockers will be out of bounds in communal areas, students will need to take their belongings between lessons.

LARGE GATHERINGS: There will be no whole school assemblies taking place throughout the Spring Term to ensure safety.



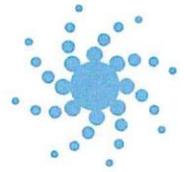
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BREAK/LUNCHTIMES: Break and lunchtimes will be staggered so that the Year Group Bubbles do not mix. Please provide your child with a healthy break snack as usual. We will be offering a hot meal option as usual, alternatively please provide your child with a healthy packed lunch.

There will be a NO CASH system in place, so use of the online payments system is essential to top-up student accounts. Remember we have moved to a new system at Christmas, please see the [Iris PlusPay area](#) in the Parent section of our website for details of how to set up.

FACE COVERINGS: The use of face coverings in classrooms and communal areas are mandatory, unless there are medical grounds for not wearing, students who refuse to wear face coverings in school will be subject to the school's behaviour policy. We will be updating out behaviour policy to reflect this.

SCHOOL RULES: We expect our students to return in full school uniform. Wearing the correct uniform is important to our identity, and school community and we recognise the importance of establishing our school as a family of learners together and uniform is integral to this.

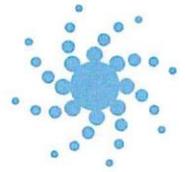
All normal school rules will apply as well as additional expectations around behaviour in corridors and the maintenance of social distancing. If students choose to ignore these expectations then the school will apply the normal range of sanctions.

STATIONERY: We encourage students to bring in their own stationery in a plastic based pencil case.

SAFETY AND CLEANING: Ensuring that our school is kept clean is a key part of our plan. This means regular cleaning of all shared spaces including classrooms, corridors, IT suites and toilets. We will put in place a "cleaning habit routine" at the start and end of every lesson in every classroom that is being used – see above.

DFE LAPTOPS: If you have been loaned a laptop from the DFE via the school, we do not require you to return these at the moment, while we are still returning from lockdown. We will be in touch with further guidance at a later date.

Hand sanitiser will be the principle means of securing hand hygiene and will be easily accessible across school grounds.



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ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING FOR STUDENTS

Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) will take place in school for students from Friday 5th March.

Staff will be provided with LFT to self-test at home twice per week.

How testing works - Comprehensive guidance on self-testing is in the 'Instructions for Use' leaflet which comes with the LFT kit, you will need to conduct the test once a week, doing a saliva test as your second weekly test. Results are ready in around 30 minutes as the LFTs supplied do not require laboratory processing.

Once the LFT has been conducted you will need to log the test result online at <http://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> and also, separately, inform the school of any positive results using [this form](#).

****Further Lateral Flow Test FAQs are at the end of this letter****

As mentioned in earlier communications, TPA are part of a test group for Southampton University, to use 'Saliva Testing' alongside the Lateral Flow Testing.

Home testing kits for saliva testing will be given to your child upon their return to school and they will have a session delivered about how to complete this.

This Saliva testing method is simple and easy-to-do. Our students will be sent home with the testing kits and instructions to carry out weekly tests in the comfort of their own home. They then return it to a drop-off point in school the next morning, this aims to reduce disruption throughout the school day. Saliva results take up to 48 hours from testing and will be sent automatically to parents via text and email. Note tests that are not correctly bagged and labelled will not be tested.

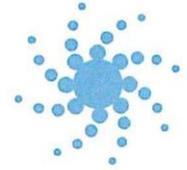
Please note that the Lateral Flow Testing is still of paramount importance, and as and when we are alerted to positive cases, any persons who have been identified as 'close contact' will still be required – by Government advice – to take a Lateral Flow Test.

Further information about testing is available in the [Covid Info](#) section of our website.

VACCINATED?

Should you or your child/ren be offered a vaccine, we will do everything to support you in accepting, please do let us know if it clashes with any timetable commitments, and we will do our best to accommodate.

Please be aware that should you or your family have the vaccine, or already be vaccinated, you and your family still need to adhere to the 'Stay Safe' rules regarding social distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene etc. While you may be protected from Covid-19 many in our school community are not, and even vaccinated people could still carry the virus.



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I understand this new information may raise some questions, so please do contact our school office with any questions you might have, and we will do our best to help.

As always, I thank you for your ongoing support in welcoming our students back from March 8th, and in the meantime, please continue to take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R Grey

Principal – The Portsmouth Academy



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Lateral Flow Testing FAQs

What if a close contact at school tests positive?

They will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, it's an option.

This guidance is subject to change following the MHRA/DfE Close Contact Testing review has been completed and published.

What if a student tests positive?

Following a positive test result the student and their household members will need to self-isolate for 10 days following Government guidelines. The student and their household **do not need to take a further 'PCR test'** (those done in testing sites) to confirm the positive result **unless they start showing symptoms**.

The student will switch to remote learning, while away from the classroom they can log onto Microsoft Teams during their allocated lesson times to receive work from their subject teachers. Please [click here](#) for guidance on remote learning and using Microsoft Teams. We will continue to support students with their education remotely.

While we recognise this may be disruptive for your family, it is important to isolate to prevent the spread of the virus.

What if a student tests negative?

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student will be told if they test positive, so if you do not hear within the 48 hours you can assume it was negative.

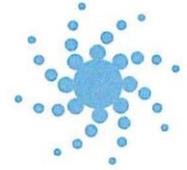
What if my child develops symptoms?

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 of change to your sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Who administers the test?

The test will be self-administered and supervised by trained staff and there will be minimal disruption to lessons. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can assist with taking the swab.

Results will be shared directly with staff and pupils participating. Where participants are under 16, parents/legal guardians will also be informed.



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Is there a cost?

Testing is free and provided by NHS Test and Trace.

How do I register and give consent?

In order to process the test, we need to register and receive consent from all participating students. This must be done prior to any in-school testing. Please fill in this form bit.ly/CV19TestConsent

How will you process this data?

For further information on how this data is obtained, retained and processed please refer to the Covid-19 Privacy notice: <https://www.tsatrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Covid-Testing-Privacy-Notice-January-2021.pdf>