



Our Ref: SW/NC

25th February 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the Government announcement earlier this week relating to the end of most Covid restrictions I am writing to update you on what this means for students who return to school on Monday 28th February in relation to face coverings and regular lateral flow testing.

From Monday, students at King James I Academy will no longer be required to wear masks when they are in school. Previously we had worked with officials from the Public Health Team in Durham, and whilst we had removed the requirement to wear face coverings in classrooms, they were still necessary in communal areas. I am pleased that this is now no longer the case. Infection rates in the area continue to fall and as a result masks are not required. They will no longer be compulsory on school transport either; however students should be mindful that if they attend anywhere with a significant number of people that they do not usually come into contact with, then wearing a mask may be a sensible decision to protect themselves and others. We understand that some students may continue to feel more comfortable wearing a mask in school. This is perfectly acceptable, and we will support any student who wishes to do this.

The routine twice weekly LFD testing that has been in place since March 2021 for staff and students has also been suspended, but in the case of a local outbreak, Public Health can advise that this is restarted and in this case we will provide testing kits as soon as we receive them.

The legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test has now been removed, however, both adults and students who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with others for 10 days. Where the Academy is aware of a student testing positive, we will insist that they remain at home and only return to school following two consecutive negative LFD tests from day 5 onwards. This is to prevent the spread of Covid as much as possible within the Academy. If a person shows any of the main symptoms of Covid-19, they should seek a PCR test as soon as possible. They should remain at home until they receive the test results and only return to school if the result is negative. There is no longer a need for close contacts to self-isolate and contact tracing by the NHS has been suspended, and students without symptoms are expected to attend school as normal.

Whilst many of the restrictions have now been removed, we will continue to promote good hand hygiene in school, with sanitiser stations located in every classroom and in various other locations around the Academy. We will also ensure that classrooms are ventilated, with windows remaining open wherever



Living the Olympic and Paralympic Values



National Support School managed by National College



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Academy Trust registered company name trading as: **King James I Academy, Bishop Auckland**

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A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under company registration number: 7638979

Charity Registration Number: 527392



possible to provide a good airflow and reduce carbon dioxide levels, and in the case of a student having to self-isolate, then work will be provided remotely for them to access.

I would like to thank all students and parents for their support in implementing all of the precautions over the last eighteen months. Hopefully we will be able to move back to normality soon, but please be aware that if infection rates increase we may need to reinstate some of the measures we have used previously, and again would appreciate your support with this.

Thank you once again.

Yours faithfully

Headteacher



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