



Covid-19 Updates 2021/22 - Letter 2

29th November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that this latest update letter finds you and your families well. As you will be aware, in common with all schools, we have experienced a number of positive cases across the school community in recent weeks. However, the changes to the rules regarding self-isolation for close contacts that have been in place since the start of term have meant that we have been able to keep disruption to teaching and learning for our students to a minimum.

You may well have seen the news at the weekend that, in light of the potential risk of the new Omicron variant, the government has reviewed the rules with regard to face coverings. The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the consequent changes that will be taking place at Prince Henry's. Initially, the new rules are being introduced for a period of three weeks and therefore apply for the remainder of this term.

Face Coverings

From Tuesday 30th November 2021, students, staff and visitors to the school will be required to wear face coverings in indoor communal areas, unless they are exempt. There is no requirement to wear face coverings in classrooms or exam venues. However, students can choose to wear a face covering if they wish.

In line with the rules relating to the hospitality sector, as Henry's, the PRH and Sixth Form Common Room are dining areas, students, staff and visitors will be allowed to remove their face coverings.

Students will be required to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport, unless they are exempt.

For the remainder of this term, all assemblies will be conducted online and shown during Tutor Time.

Testing and Start of Term Arrangements

Please encourage your child to take a lateral flow test twice weekly. Further testing kits will be issued to all students in the next few days, to ensure that they have an adequate supply of kits to last for the remainder of the term and to test prior to the start of next term.

Schools have been asked to undertake one on-site lateral flow test for all students, when the new term starts on Tuesday 4th January 2022, and to ensure that in doing this, the number of contacts between students is limited. **Unless government guidance changes (and I will update you if it does), as we did in September, we will be staggering the return of students to school in January as follows:**

- **Tuesday 4th January:** Year 11 students return to school & being tested
- **Wednesday 5th January:** Years 12 and 13 return to school & being tested
- **Thursday 6th January:** Year 10 return to school & being tested
- **Friday 7th January:** Year 9 return to school & being tested

Students who are not physically in school will receive online teaching via Teams in line with their normal timetable and attendance will be monitored in the normal way. Further information on how to access the school's online resources (including Teams) is available alongside this letter in the Covid-19 Updates area of the school website. Year 9 students will be supported in accessing Teams from school during the next few

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Working in collaboration with Bredon Hill and St Egwin's Middle Schools

days. Please may I request that all parents/carers ensure that their child has managed to log in to Teams successfully from home before the end of term. If you do experience any issues, please request support by contacting passwordenquiry@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk.

Contact Tracing and Isolation

The current guidance on contact tracing and isolation remains in place. Any person who develops symptoms of Covid or who is asymptomatic but tests positive via a lateral flow test should self-isolate and arrange for a PCR test to be undertaken either by calling 119 or booking it online via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. If they are notified of a positive test result by NHS Test and Trace, they must self-isolate for 10 days. The 10 days will be either from the date on which symptoms started, or if asymptomatic, from the date of the PCR test. Symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Members of the same household as a person who has tested positive may also take a PCR test, but unless this comes back as positive and the positive test does not identify the Omicron variant, under current guidelines they are not required to self-isolate if any of the following apply:

- They are fully vaccinated
- They are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- They have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- They are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Positive Testing for Omicron Variant

Under the government's updated rules, the close contacts of anyone who has tested positive for the Omicron variant will be required to self-isolate for 10 days, regardless of vaccination status or age.

Notifying the School of Suspected and/or Positive Cases

Please keep reporting cases into Mrs Jennings (Years 9-11) or Mrs Tranter (Sixth Form) through our attendance lines. Whilst updated government rules that have been in place since August mean the responsibility for track and trace has now moved from schools to Public Health England (PHE), if we detect an increase in the number of cases, then we liaise with the Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT) for Worcestershire. However, schools are no longer notifying parents of close contacts and children must attend school unless they have symptoms of Covid or a positive lateral flow test until confirmed by a PCR test. If they test positive at that point, your child will be notified of their isolation requirements by PHE's Test & Trace; if they test negative, they can return to school.

We are in a position where, through the monitoring of our attendance data, we can see when positive cases are being confirmed and identify any emerging patterns. This will enable us to seek guidance from the LORT and introduce precautions locally to mitigate any spread.

Planned Live Events at Prince Henry's

Due to the rapidly-changing situation in relation to the pandemic, in the interests of protecting the school and wider community, the following changes have been made in relation to the school calendar.

- **Sixth Form Taster Day** will go ahead as planned on Friday 3rd December 2021.
- **Drop the Mic (live Interact Event)**: this event was scheduled to take place in The Henrician Theatre this Friday, 3rd December. It has now been postponed until Wednesday 16th February 2022. The Interact Spring Concert that was scheduled to take place on that evening will now happen at a later date (date to be confirmed). Tickets that have already been purchased will be transferred to the new date, or a refund can be provided (please email tickets@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk)
- **Sixth Form Birmingham German Markets trip**, Wednesday 8th December. At the current time, this trip will still be taking place.

- **Christmas Concert:** this event was scheduled to take place in The Henrician Theatre on Tuesday 14th December. Instead, it will now be a pre-recorded event and available to view online and refunds will automatically be arranged for any tickets already purchased.

As usual, I will provide you with updates as soon as we receive any notification of changes to government or NHS guidance.

In the meantime, I hope that you and your families stay safe and well.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely



Dr A Evans
Headteacher