



3 January 2022

Dear Parent or Carer,

Happy New Year to you and your family - we hope this update finds you enjoying a great Christmas break and that you are getting ready to return for the new term fully rested and having had time to spend with your nearest and dearest.

Here are some important reminders about the return to school for all students on Wednesday 5 January.

1. Face Coverings

We were notified yesterday that face coverings for students will be recommended **in class for all students from 5 January**. This is a temporary measure that the government will review in the coming weeks.

This means that there is an **expectation that your child, unless exempt, will come to school with a face mask and will wear it indoors during the school day** (except of course when eating and drinking at break and lunch). This will include assemblies (which is already an expectation) but for the first time since March 2021, this will mean in class as well.

This is government guidance which is being reintroduced to prevent further partial closures of schools, which none of us want. We would ask you to support this for the sake of students and their learning continuing with the least possible disruption. Please also be aware that the layout of our site means that students will have plenty of opportunities to remove masks if needed outdoors between lessons and at break and lunch.

Of course, some young people will be exempt from wearing face coverings because of physical or mental health illness or impairment, or because wearing them would cause them severe distress. We will continue to respect this and treat all our young people sensitively.

If you have previously notified us of an exemption, you do not need to do so again. If you are a new parent or carer, or need to notify us about a new exemption, please do so via the link below.

<https://forms.gle/bzZE1khLWxW5ApYv5>

2. Testing before students return to College

All students should **complete a lateral flow test on Tuesday** before they return to college on Wednesday. This will be vital in ensuring that we keep our school as safe as possible in the current circumstances.

Please report the result to the College and the NHS using the links here:

[Report Results to College](#)

[Report your results to the NHS Test and Trace site - click here](#)

We still have some spare testing kits for any young people who have run out of testing kits over the Christmas break. These are available to collect from **Ariel reception on Tuesday 4 January between 10am and 1pm.**

3. Student Absences and Self Isolation

Please continue to report any student absences, including because of positive COVID tests, to studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk. Please also be aware that the self-isolation period for students can now be reduced from 10 days to 7 days if certain conditions are met around lateral flow testing. You will be advised on this process once you notify us that your young person has tested positive.

4. First Day Back: Wednesday 5 January

We start at our usual time on Wednesday- students need to be onsite for 0845 and in their classrooms by 0850. Because of timetable changes, please remember students will go to their tutor group from 0850 to 0910 on Wednesday so that tutors can welcome students back and ensure everyone has their correct timetable.

Please be aware that the Department for Education has also advised schools to consider flexible approaches to timetabling and class arrangements in preparation for anticipated staffing absence arising from the spread of the Omnicron variant. We very much hope this will not be needed and will continue to do all we can to minimise changes to your young person's experience in school. Thank you in advance for your understanding if we do need to make adjustments, such as combining classes or changing staffing at short notice, and rest assured we will continue to update you as the term progresses.

As ever, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or feedback about arrangements for the start of term. My email address is asalt@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk.

If you have any urgent feedback or questions, I will be hosting a short online **Q and A tomorrow, Tuesday 4 January from 5pm until 5.30pm** which you can access using this link: <https://meet.google.com/czz-wywi-qza>.

With best wishes,

Yours faithfully,



Alan Salt
Principal