



Reopening from 8th March Information for Parents



Phased return to face to face teaching and asymptomatic testing

When returning to school students will be offered three Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests spaced three to five working days apart (minimum three days and this does not include weekends). Students will return to face to face education following their first negative test result. Following the three initial tests, students will collect their 'test at home' kits and start testing at home on a regular basis.

Testing will be supervised by trained staff. The "lateral flow" tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. We have been testing key worker pupils and staff in school since January, so we have an experienced testing team in place to enable this to run smoothly as possible.

The results from **Testing round 1** (which take around half an hour) will be shared directly with the school and you will only be notified if your child tests positive. There will be 3 tests in total conducted by the school. Following these your child will be provided with an "at home kit" and they will be expected to test themselves at home weekly. Further instructions will follow when we send these kits home.

The government has given schools the flexibility to decide how best to deliver testing on a phased basis from 8th March depending on their circumstances. Therefore, our time frame for testing and a return to face to face teaching is as follows:

	Appointments for Testing (Round 1)	Return to school	Testing Round 2 and 3
Round 1 testing, students attend for appointment and then return home for remote learning.			The remaining tests will be conducted within the school day
Year 11	Friday 5 th March (am)	Monday 8th March 8.25am	
Year 10	Monday 8th March (pm)	Tuesday 9th March 8.15am	
Year 9	Tuesday 9th March (am)	Wednesday 10th March 8.25am	
Year 8	Monday 8th March (am)	Tuesday 9th March 8.25am	
Year 7	Wednesday 10th March (am)	Thursday 11th March 8.15am	

In order to ensure that we can manage the flow of students through the testing centre, students must arrive on the correct date and within these time slots:

Year 11 Only (Friday 5th March)

Surname	Morning (am) slot
A-I	8:30-9:15
J-R	9:20-10:05
S-Z	10:10-10:55

Asymptomatic testing guidance continued

Years 7-10 (Monday 8th March – Wednesday 10th March)

Surname	Morning (am) slot	Afternoon (pm slot)
A-E	8:30-9:00	12:00-12:30
F-J	9:05- 9:35	12:35-13:05
K-O	9:40- 10:10	13:10-13:40
P-T	10:15- 10:45	13:45-14:15
U-Z	10:50-11:20	14:20-14.50

Parents and carers will only be informed of the test result if the test is positive.

Students not undergoing testing will attend school in line with the phased return arrangements identified above. Students who are currently in school will continue to attend school and then will be reintegrated back to face to face teaching when their year group returns.

What happens if the test is positive in school? (Testing round 2 & 3)

If your child tests positive they will be isolated, and you will be contacted immediately. Ideally, we would ask that you collect them as quickly as possible but in extreme circumstances we have been told that a child can make their own way home if they do not use public transport and you give permission.

What happens if the test is negative in school? (Testing round 2 & 3)

They will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. Parents and pupil's 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. A small number of pupils may need to repeat the test if the first test was invalid or void for some reason.

What if my child develops symptoms or tests positive with an "at home kit"?

The 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 [Get a free NHS test to check if you have coronavirus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)** . They must also remain at home if they receive a positive result from the "at home kit" or if anybody in the household tests positive for Covid-19.

The rules around isolation following a positive test remain the same. If a positive lateral flow test is returned you must isolate for 10 days from the test result. We will still be required to send any identified close contacts home and they will need to isolate for 10 days. Work will be provided to any student forced to isolate through Track and Trace this will be through a work pack. Only students that have been told to isolate through Track and Trace will be given access to this work as all other students must be in school.

Attendance to school after 8th March

Whilst we understand this may cause some of you anxiety, the government has made school attendance mandatory for all students from 8 March. The usual rules on school attendance apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school
- the school's ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

If you have any concerns regarding your child's return to school please contact your child's Head of Year at the earliest possible opportunity and before your child's return date. We will endeavour to put bespoke arrangements into place to meet your family's needs and will work with you to find a positive solution.

If your child is SEND and you require support or would like to discuss this further please contact Mrs Lynn Brammer (SENDCo) or Mr Lee Colclough (Assistant SENDCo)

Mrs Lynn Brammer SENDCo: lbrammer@bircheshead.org.uk

Mr Lee Colclough Assistant SENDCo: lcolclough2@bircheshead.org.uk

Mrs Tina Adlington Head of Year 7: tadlington@bircheshead.org.uk

Mr Owen Harding: Head of Year 8: oharding@bircheshead.org.uk

Mrs Rebecca Hilton Head of Year 9: rhilton@bircheshead.org.uk

Mrs Laura Walker Head of Year 10: lwalker@bircheshead.org.uk

Mr Leon Ashman Head of Year 11: lashman@bircheshead.org.uk

A small number of students will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate because they:

- have symptoms or have had a positive test result
- live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact
- are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19)

Where this is the case, please continue to follow the procedures established in September and inform the attendance office immediately.

Protective Measures

All protective measures set out in September will continue to apply. In addition, the government are **recommending that face coverings (not a shield) should be worn in classrooms unless social distancing can be maintained.** This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons.

Face coverings do not need to be worn by staff or students when outdoors on the premises.

We fully appreciate that this will not be comfortable for staff or students but, whilst we are still vulnerable to the infection rate rising again, the government have made this part of reopening schools.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings this applies to those who:

- Cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical impairment or disability, illness or mental health difficulty.
- Speak to or provide help to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate.

We are sensitive to these needs and note that some people are less able to wear face coverings and that the reasons for this will be less visible to others.



Standards and expectations

Upon your child's return to school the usual standards and expectations will remain in place.

Uniform

Students are expected to wear their full academy uniform every day. **Students will no longer attend school wearing PE uniform instead they will change into their PE kit during the lessons.** If your child has grown out of their blazer, jumper, PE kit or needs a new tie you should order these items as soon as possible from our school supplier. <https://www.motifmarketing.co.uk/>. The remaining uniform items (i.e trousers, skirts and shirts) can be purchased from any other provider.

School skirts and trousers

School trousers: Tailored mid grey trousers for both boys and girls. These should look like suit trousers and should be made from cotton like material.

School skirt: Tailored mid grey skirt, knee length worn with black opaque tights. Skirts must be the correct length which is on the knee or slightly below, allowing 2 centimetres growth.

School shoes: Plain black sensible leather shoes (no logo), no canvas shoes, no trainer style shoes.

School shoes are particularly expensive, but we have had issues this year with parents spending a lot of money on footwear which clearly does not take note of the above information. We would very much like to avoid this as it puts the school at odds with the student which is not what any of us would wish for and is a negative start for all concerned.

Jewellery

Jewellery of any description is not encouraged and is not practical for many reasons. A flat, plain ring and one pair of small, plain stud and a watch are the only items allowed. All Jewellery must be removed for PE activities and is brought into school entirely at the student's own risk.

Nose studs and all other types of piercing are not allowed.

Students will be required to remove any items of jewellery which contravenes this code; they will be confiscated and given back to the student at the end of the day.

Hair and cosmetics

Hair must be one colour and neat in appearance, no shaved patterns, 'holiday braids' or hair extensions are permitted. False nails, false eyelashes or other such beauty accessories are not acceptable.

If you do decide to allow your child to have additional piercings please ensure that they are removed for school.

We are very proud of our school and of our students and believe that high standards of uniform, behaviour, being properly equipped and attending regularly give each and every one of our students the very best chance of learning well and achieving their very best.

Equipment

We expect all students to arrive to every lesson prepared. All students must have: Pencil case, pencils, pens, ruler, rubber and their planner with them daily.

Support and wellbeing

We acknowledge this lockdown has been extremely difficult for many of our students and families and that some students may need additional support when they get back to school or prior to returning to school.

If your child has been previously supported by the school councilor or the mental health team, a member of the safeguarding team or your child's Head of Year will contact you prior to your child's return. This will give you an opportunity to discuss any concerns or anxieties and arrange any bespoke support. In addition to this, if you would like to discuss any concerns about returning to school you can email info@bircheshead.org.uk

Laptop returns

If your child has loaned a laptop they will need to return it, along with the charger and case (if applicable) on either, the day of their test or the during the week they return to teaching. The laptop must be returned to Friday 12 March. The laptop will be checked for any damage and then will be signed back into school.

On test days – please return the item to Main Reception.

During school students must remain in their bubble zones. Y7/8/ 9 please return your laptop to your form tutor. Y10/11 please return your laptop to Student Reception. Main Reception is available for parents to return laptops.



FAQs

Do all students have to test?

Testing is voluntary and individuals will be allowed to attend school even if they decide not to take part in testing. However, we would like to encourage everyone to join in the asymptomatic testing programme to help break transmission links by identifying those that may be carrying the virus unknowingly. Anyone with symptoms, whether they are involved in this programme or not, should book a free NHS test and follow government self-isolation guidance until the results of their test are known.

Why can't students start testing at home immediately?

It is important that initially students are supervised whilst swabbing to make sure they are doing it correctly. This is why testing will initially take place on-site.

Can students swab themselves?

Yes, in an Asymptomatic Testing Site all students can swab themselves if they are able to. When testing at home, children should self-test and report with adult supervision. The adult may conduct the test if necessary.

What happens if a student struggles to perform the test?

If a student administers the test and finds it difficult then there are Testing Assistants on hand to provide support. They are well-trained and will administer the test for the student if they request it. If a student feels as though they cannot complete the test after the support of a Testing Assistant, there will be no requirement for them to complete it and their parent/ carer will be contacted.

What happens if a student test positive following the asymptomatic test?

If a student tests positive for Covid-19, they must self-isolate for 10 days from the day after they tested positive and we must be informed immediately

What happens if a student is unable to test themselves at home but have opted in for testing?

We will retain a "small" testing site for those unable to test at home. Please inform the school if you are unable to administer the home test.