

Dear parent/carer,

I hope you have all had a lovely summer so far and that students are looking forward to returning to school as much as we are. In particular, I hope new Year 7 students are excited about joining Lymm High School; we are certainly eager to meet them.

This letter aims to provide you with an overview of the latest situation regarding arrangements for the coming term. As ever, if you do have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

You may also want to read [this letter](#) from Warrington Borough Council’s directors of Education and Public Health, which provides some further context for this term.

**Start of term and asymptomatic testing**

A final reminder that Year 7 and 12 will start on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September** to give them a chance to settle in before all other year groups begin on **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September**.

On arrival on the first day, **Year 7 students** will be lining up on the English Yard with their tutors but can just come to the front of school, where there will be plenty of people to show them where they need to go.

**Years 8–13** should go straight to their form room when they arrive. The rooms will be posted on Satchel / Show My Homework by Monday at the latest. Please note, as with last year, students should wait outside the buildings until 8.15 unless the weather is poor.

As you will be aware from our communication before the holiday, we are required to **test students on-site** twice as they return. The details for this are contained in [Mr Johnson’s letter](#), but here is a reminder of the times for testing:

Time	Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept	Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept
8.30–10am	Year 11	Year 9
10.30am–12pm	Year 8	Year 10
1–2pm	Year 7, L forms	Years 12 and 13
2–3pm	Year 7, H forms	

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We have had a few questions as to whether **students who have already tested positive** should take the tests. The advice from the government is that anyone testing positive should wait 90 days before resuming testing unless they develop symptoms, in which case they should arrange for a PCR test.

We are required to gain consent for testing. This will mainly apply to those joining us in Year 7 but there may be others who have joined the school more recently or where parents or carers are now ready to give consent. If you haven't already given consent, please fill out the form via the link [here](#).

Finally, following the initial tests in school the government has asked for students and staff to resume **testing at home twice weekly**, at least until the end of September. As previously, we will provide test kits to students to take home and we will provide further guidance on this next week.

### **Measures in school**

There is no doubt that school will feel different on our return. Despite our very best efforts to retain as many elements of normality as possible last year, it was frustrating that we could not do many of the things we would have liked to. It is therefore very exciting that we can return to our normal timetable, including tutor time at the start of the day, run a full programme of extra-curricular activities (n.b. trips are a bit trickier at the moment, but we still anticipate being able to run a lot more) and hold proper assemblies again. Face coverings will no longer be expected (except on school buses) and teachers will also be freer to circulate classrooms and look at books more easily. Perhaps above all, changes to self-isolation rules and definitions of close contacts mean that we hope and expect to see far fewer students having to miss school.

Of course, this does not mean we will be paying no regard to the implications of the Covid pandemic. You can be sure that, as a school, we are following all the guidance regarding things like enhanced cleaning regimes, ventilation and promoting good hand and respiratory hygiene that are referred to in the letter from Warrington BC.

In addition, although schools no longer have responsibility for contact tracing, we will be tracking the number of positive cases carefully, ready to consult with public health experts about which aspects of our contingency plans might need to be introduced if necessary.

For those who do have to stay at home for reasons related to Covid, we will also continue to provide our 'window into lessons' that are taking place in school.

You can help us with all of this by:

- Encouraging your children to practise good hand hygiene (e.g. regular washing with warm water and soap and using hand sanitiser) and good respiratory hygiene (e.g. ["Catch It, Bin It, Kill It"](#))
- Strictly following rules relating to self-isolation when children display Covid symptoms – and keeping us informed (see below)
- Following all government rules relating to return from any holidays abroad this summer
- Ensuring your child wears a face covering on buses if they use one to get to school
- If your child is over 16, encouraging them to get vaccinated ([click here for details](#))

### **Contact tracing and self-isolation**

The most important points of all relating to this are:

- If your child displays any of the Covid symptoms (i.e. new continuous cough and/or high temperature and/or loss of normal sense of taste or smell), they **must** self-isolate immediately and you must arrange for them to have a PCR test as soon as possible. Under no circumstances should they attend school.
- Similarly, if they test positive on a lateral flow device, even if they do not have any symptoms, they **must** self-isolate immediately and seek a PCR test.
- If your child tests positive, then in addition to your contact with NHS Test and Trace we would appreciate it if you could send an email to [covidtrack@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:covidtrack@lymmhigh.org.uk) so that we can retain an overview of the situation.

Beyond this, there have also been changes to how positive cases and close contacts are dealt with, meaning that schools are no longer responsible for identifying close contacts. **Contact tracing** will instead be conducted by NHS Test and Trace.

You will probably be aware that the rules surrounding **isolation for close contacts** have changed over the summer, meaning that children will no longer be required to isolate if identified as a close contact. Instead, they will be expected to take a PCR test. There is no need to self-isolate whilst waiting for that PCR test result, which means students can continue coming into school while waiting for the test result, as long as they do not have symptoms.

Further, the definitions of a close contact have changed, meaning it is no longer the case that, for example, close contacts will be identified as a result of sitting near someone in a lesson. The guidance from the government says that: *“Contacts in an educational setting will be traced if the positive case specifically identified an individual as having close contact which will normally have occurred in a social setting e.g. sleepovers... Being in a setting with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact. We expect there to be a very small number of close contacts on average for each case”.*

Doubtless circumstances will continue to change but I am equally confident that we will be able to respond if they do. In the meantime, I hope this provides you with the information you need for now and that everybody enjoys the final few days of the holidays.

Kind regards



Gwyn Williams