

Dear Parent/Carer

Spring Term Return

Yesterday the government confirmed revised plans for a phased start to the spring term alongside a mass Covid testing programme for school students and staff. The plans are intended to ensure effective education can continue, albeit remotely in the first week or so, whilst reducing the spread of the virus as students and staff return after Christmas.

Carre's Grammar School will follow the government guidance on how to phase the start of term. This means the following:

Phased start to term

From Tuesday 5 - Friday 8 January all students in Years 7-13 should access learning remotely. Attendance and engagement in online lessons is compulsory for all students and they will follow their normal timetable in all subjects except core PE. Year 12 Parents' Evening will take place as previously advertised, on 6 January. Please have a look at the attached instructions for accessing lessons via Microsoft Teams as well as important safeguarding reminders with which all parents should ensure their children are familiar and compliant.

The following students are able come into school if there is no safer supervision at home:

- Vulnerable children – the SENCO will contact these students.
- Children of critical workers. We deem those in Years 7 and 8 to be of the age to need supervising in school but strongly encourage older children of critical workers to continue with their studies from home giving them better access to live online lessons.

If you have not already done so, you must register your child's attendance using this online form if they need to attend school all day on any day from the 5-8 January.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4I_ewOP1L06Lz_HFSzjyi8EPGzxQhfZLsS8e7Vn1JG5UREhDVkNSUDZaMINSRlpBMzNHUIVaUEFTRy4u

If you are unsure about whether or not your child falls into one of these categories, please contact us on enquiries@carres.uk for confirmation (we will respond to any messages on 4 January), or check the [categories for critical workers here](#).

Mass testing programme

Testing for those **without coronavirus symptoms** is beginning across the country using new, quicker Covid-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'. (Please see the end of this email for further information regarding the tests). We anticipate that our testing programme will start from Monday 11 January. Year 11 and 13 students will be given priority for the tests when they return to school that week. Vocational exams for some Year 12 students will take place in the week beginning 11 January and these students too will be prioritised for testing.

You can read more about how the government expects the mass testing programme to work [here](#). Along with the other protective measures we are taking, these tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep

the school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

Those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. The tests will be self-administered by all those confident enough to do so. Staff will be trained to oversee the swab process. Students take two tests 3-5 days apart to increase the accuracy of the result.

Positive results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed.

Once the mass testing programme is complete, tests will then be available in school for any student/member of staff who has come into close contact with a positive case. Students/staff consenting will be able to remain in school as long as they commit to 7 consecutive school days of rapid flow testing. In line with routine infection control practice, close contacts who decide not to be tested daily in these circumstances will need to self-isolate in line with [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

These lateral flow device (LFD) tests are only for people with no symptoms. If your child has any symptoms at the start of term, **they must not come to school** and you should organise a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test for them in the usual way.

Your Consent

If you are happy to be tested /for your child to be tested, please complete this consent form (one per student) and submit it by 8 January 2021. Students aged 16 or over may provide consent themselves but must still complete the form.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4I_ewOP1L06Lz_HFSzji8EPGzxQhfZLS8e7Vn1JG5UMEpNMFpFM0hINIRXS1NSTjFQRUxKU1BGTS4u

Yours faithfully

N M Law
Headteacher

Additional Information

Testing is Voluntary

For every group, testing is voluntary, but those who are eligible for tests are strongly encouraged to participate to reduce the risk of transmission within schools and colleges.

What if a member of staff or a student tests positive?

Participating staff and pupils who test positive will be informed about their results individually. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be notified. Guidance on safe travel and additional precautions will be provided along with test results.

Pupils will need to take a further 'PCR test' (similar to those done in local and regional testing sites) on the same day (or as soon as possible). The school will be able to provide these PCR test kits to perform at home, or you can go to www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119 to book a follow-up test. If ordering a PCR test yourselves, they should choose to visit a drive-through test site if possible, as it is faster than requesting a home test. During this time whilst waiting for the PCR result (via text / email) a member of staff or student will need to self-isolate.

If the PCR test returns a positive result will have to self-isolate and follow the guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

What happens if the test is negative?

A member of staff/student will be able to stay in school and resume their activities as normal. A student 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 a close contact at school/college tests positive?

A close contact of someone in school/college who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be able to return to [school/college] if they agree to be tested once a day for 7 days and the test is negative. If they do not want to take the test, they will need to self-isolate as per the national guidelines. This does not apply to household members or close contacts outside of school who will still need to self-isolate. Further details will be provided at the time, but if you would prefer to self-isolate instead of doing daily testing, you can.

What if my child has or develops symptoms?

This testing programme at school is for people **with no symptoms**. If a member of staff/student 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 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or 0300 303 2713 (Scotland) or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. *Please let us know as soon as possible by using the following details:*

Self-Isolating student

To alert us to the fact that your child is self-isolating (but has not yet tested positive) enquiries@carres.uk or **01529 302181**. Your message will be picked up in school hours and teachers will be informed that work needs to be set remotely.

Covid Positive student

In school office hours (8am - 4.30pm) please phone the school directly **01529 302181**
Out of school office hours (including evenings and weekends from January 5 onwards) covid19@carres.uk or phone the hotline **07476 984503**.

If a member of the household has tested positive, other than the student, please simply contact us using the email address enquiries@carres.uk or call the main office on **01529 302181**. There is no need to call the hotline number.

We will support our staff and pupils throughout, but please contact us if you have any questions. You can call the office on 01529414044 or email enquiries@carres.uk

Alongside the testing programme we will continue to implement the safety measures we have been using in the autumn term.