

9th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well and that your child is settling into the new term. It's great to have everyone back at the academy, and we are very much looking forward to the year ahead.

In light of the new term starting, I thought it would be helpful to get in touch to clarify our current policies around coronavirus procedures and protocol. As always, these are in line with Government guidelines, and we will continue to keep a close eye on advice and adapt where necessary.

As you may already be aware, guidance has changed since last term and **students will no longer need to isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19.**

Instead, your child will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, and informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage any student who is advised to take a PCR test to do so.

The only instance where this does not occur is if your child is above 18 years and six months but has not been vaccinated and is not exempt for medical reasons. In that case, they will need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact.

In order to minimise the spread of the virus, students are encouraged to continue lateral flow testing twice weekly at home (every 3-5 days). New supplies of home testing kits will be distributed early next week. This advice is due to be reviewed at the end of September, so we will get in touch if it changes.

Anyone who receives a positive lateral flow test result should self-isolate and book a PCR test. If that's taken within two days of the lateral flow test and comes back negative it overrides the lateral flow and your child can return to the academy, provided they don't have COVID-19 symptoms. If your child tests positive on the PCR, they must self-isolate for ten days as usual.

Meanwhile, there is no longer a requirement to wear face coverings while at the academy, neither in classrooms nor in communal areas. However, we would ask that students continue to wear them while on public transport to and from the academy. If your child feels more comfortable continuing to wear a face mask, that is absolutely fine.

I also want to take this opportunity to reassure you that we are continuing to put in place safety precautions to limit the spread of the virus as much as possible, our risk assessment is on the website: <https://ormistonriversacademy.co.uk/key-info/covid-testing-in-school>

We continue to remind students to wash hands regularly and have installed additional hand sanitizing stations around the academy. Every classroom has hand sanitizer in it, as well as cleaning supplies to ensure desks and equipment are wiped down at the end of every lesson, classrooms and corridors are ventilated throughout the day. The health, safety and wellbeing of our staff, students and wider community remain our number one priority and we will continue to follow guidance to ensure it.

I hope that this information is helpful and clarifies any queries you might have. However, if you do have any further questions please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large initial 'J' followed by a series of loops and a final flourish.

Jo Williams
Principal