

**PLEASE SEE THIS IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT PUPILS RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY:**

**Testing offered to schools and colleges to minimise cases and transmission of the virus with return of students after Christmas**

The government has today (17th December 2020) confirmed that all secondary schools and colleges in England will be able to test more of their staff and students in a round of free coronavirus testing from the first week of January.

The offer of tests will mean that pupils and staff have access to [rapid testing](#) from January 2021.

**Pupils in Year 11 only, vulnerable children and children of critical workers will all attend school or college in person from the start of term (Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021),** as will all students in primary, special and alternative provision schools and colleges.

**Pupils in Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 will not return to school until Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**

**However, all of their lessons will be taught on-line via Teams. Pupils who do not have a computer/laptop/access to the internet have been identified and provided with the equipment.**

The school will be offering full-time remote education, as close as possible to that which students would get in class, from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021, with face-to-face education for all starting on Monday 11th January 2021.

Testing in schools is crucial for us to break the chains of transmission and keep students, staff and their loved ones safe. The government will therefore be supporting schools and colleges in England to offer testing at the start of January.

Rapid testing is a reliable and effective way to identify people without symptoms that we otherwise wouldn't know about.

Schools and colleges will be able to establish testing to offer students two rapid tests three days apart, with positive results confirmed by a lab-based PCR test.

Guidance will shortly be provided to schools and colleges on how to set up and staff the testing sites. Armed forces personnel will support directly through planning with schools

Those students attending face-to-face education in the first week of term will be offered the first testing dates.

**Testing will be optional but strongly encouraged, particularly in areas of higher prevalence of the virus. Consent will be required from the student or parent as appropriate.**

Whilst a negative test result can provide reassurance, those returning to education following a negative result should still follow all relevant guidance including enhanced hygiene measures and wearing face coverings where appropriate.

Students who receive positive test results will be required to self-isolate in line with existing guidance.