



4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Lateral flow tests

Many thanks to our parents and students for engaging with the lateral flow test initiative at school. So far, we have received consents to test 89% of PHSG students. I feel that this very high engagement with the lateral flow test offer indicates that our community supports the protective and preventative measures we have put in place. I thank you for your positive involvement. If parents have yet to give consent for their child to take part in the LFT programme, there is still time. Please use the link below to give consent. After selecting 'yes' parents will have the opportunity to enter their child's details.

### [LFT Consent Form](#)

After the three tests in school, home testing will be available. Please use this [link](#) to order home test kits online, or visit your local test centre to collect kits. Local sites that can supply home testing kits are located at Plymouth Guildhall and Plymouth Marjon between 1.30pm and 7pm, 7 days a week.

If your child tests positive via a home testing kit, they should isolate for ten days as should all their close contacts. If a school child tests positive using a home testing kit, they will not be asked to attend a testing site and take a confirmatory PCR test. Parents should contact school if their child tests positive via a home testing kit.

## PE Lessons

Thinking Schools Academy Trust have decided that to use changing rooms for PE at this time is not advisable. Therefore, we are going to ask that if a student has a practical PE lesson on a particular day, they attend school in their PE uniform. We will review the use of changing rooms before the Easter break and communicate this to you and the students.

## Lunchtime

As a reminder, from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March, lunchtime will be from 1.30pm to 2.30pm.

## Face coverings

Following further guidance regarding the use of face coverings in schools I am writing to confirm our expectations of students as they return to school from March 8<sup>th</sup>.

As previously communicated, we expect the wearing of face coverings when students and adults are indoors and unable to maintain 2m social distancing. This follows specific government guidance on the use of face coverings in school from 8<sup>th</sup> March, is a proportionate response to the current situation and is in line with the expectations on the use of face coverings in wider society:

- Government advice on schools reopening: “The use of face coverings in recommended circumstances is one element of the system of controls and must be implemented in line with other guidance ... face coverings should be worn in classrooms.”

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/965446/Face\\_coverings\\_in\\_education\\_-\\_March\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/965446/Face_coverings_in_education_-_March_2021.pdf)

- The World Health Organisation has advised that “children aged 12 and over should wear a face covering under the same conditions as adults, in particular when they cannot guarantee at least a 1-metre distance from others and there is widespread transmission in the area.” This is the case in classrooms.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-children-and-masks-related-to-covid-19>

- In England, the government requires the wearing of a face covering in almost all indoor settings including: public transport; shops and post offices and banks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>

We are, however, aware that some students and staff may be exempt from wearing a face covering due to a disability or other social, behavioural, emotional or medical need, or if wearing a mask will cause severe distress. We know that some parents have already informed us where this is the case and we have facilitated students not having to wear a face covering in these circumstances. Please contact Mrs Payne at [spayne@phsg.org](mailto:spayne@phsg.org) if your child is exempt from wearing a face covering.

Prior to the latest lockdown, our students behaved wonderfully and followed the rules really well. In the very rare occasions that a student fails to follow our face covering rules (assuming they are not exempt), we will view that as a breach of our health and safety requirements and the measures we are putting in place to keep our community safe. Therefore, we will be using our behaviour policy to support compliance where students are not wearing a face covering, and are not exempt from doing so, including:

- Students will receive verbal reminders of the need to wear their face covering indoors.
- Students will have the opportunity to reflect and make the right choice.
- In the event of continued failure to comply with the expectations the student could be removed from the setting to an area where they can work in a safe, socially distanced way. We will then support the student to understand why it is important for them to wear their face covering. We will also look to engage parents in supporting us in enforcing this expectation.
- Should students repeatedly refuse to comply with the expectation to wear a face covering then the school's behaviour policy will be used including escalating sanctions.

This policy will be reviewed at the end of this term.

Many thanks for your support and understanding in our efforts to keep our whole community safe.

Best Wishes



**Simon Underdown.**  
**Headteacher.**

