

19 July 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

As we reach the end of this rather unpredictable year, I would firstly like to thank you for all your support helping your child learn during lockdown. Also, for helping your child for the majority of this academic year in coming to school, as well as doing those rather tedious lateral flow tests. Home testing has made a big difference as well as the school keeping students in their social bubbles at school, keeping rooms ventilated and keeping up with the hygiene and one-way systems. We will maintain these systems next year regardless of where we are with infection rates as we have noticed that non-Covid related illness has actually been really low. Students like the Covid adaptations too so this all makes sense.

Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in positive cases in recent weeks, like other local schools. Each case was diligently reported to us by parents, helping reduce the risk of transmission at school. It was a shame to have to send Year 9 and 12 home last week due to a small cluster of cases but, again, teachers are reporting excellent engagement in Teams live lessons and other forms of remote learning, a skill we certainly did not have at the beginning of the pandemic.

Key Dates:

School finishes at 12:30pm tomorrow, Tuesday 20 July.

As a reminder, here are a few key dates:

- **Tuesday 10 August** Year 13 Exam Results
- **Thursday 12 August** Year 11 Exam Results and Sixth Form Enrolment
- **Mon 23 - Fri 27 August** New Year 7 Summer School (brilliant sign up of 230/270 students)
- **Wed 1 / Thurs 2 September** Staff training days
- **Friday 3 September** Year 7 and 12 induction days
- **Monday 6 September** Return to school for all students

LFT Testing arrangements – please note:

We have ensured that every student has sufficient tests in order to comply with the following requests:

- **Year 7 & 12** students will need to complete Lateral Flow Tests at home on **Monday 30 August** and **Thursday 2 September** prior to them starting in school on **Friday 3 September**.
- Year 12 students will be given LFT tests to take home on results day. The new Year 7 Intake were given LFT tests in their packs on Induction Day 1.
- **Year 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13** students will need to complete Lateral Flow Tests at home on **Thursday 2 September** and **Sunday 5 September** prior to them starting in school on **Monday 6 September**.

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- If either test is positive, keep your child at home, inform us (DPO@birchwoodhigh.org.uk) and book an online PCR test. These can be done on the day they are booked and the result comes back the following day.
- Throughout the Autumn Term, if you or anyone in your family develops Covid-like symptoms, please keep your child off school and get a PCR test.
- Under new guidance, if a student has sat near a positive case, they will be asked to go home, complete a PCR test and then return to school providing the test is negative – this will be far less disruptive.

Over the summer, please make sure you and your family have a well-deserved break. Thank you, once again, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Chris Ingate

Dr Chris Ingate
Principal