



8<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

In this letter

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### **Covid update**

We're really grateful to parents and students in supporting a really smooth in-school testing process prior to the start of term. Over 90% of eligible students have received an on-site test, which is of huge reassurance as we do all we can do reduce transmission and maintain continuity of education for as many students as possible.

It is vital that students continue to test twice-weekly. As with other organisations, we have limited supplies and, whilst we do have kits available at the Student Centre when students have run out, we would ask you to try and source them directly wherever you can.

You may be aware that, from Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January, confirmatory PCR tests following a positive Lateral Flow Device test result are to be temporarily suspended. This means that anyone who receives a positive LFD test result will be required to self-isolate and will not be required to take a confirmatory PCR test.

The guidance from the government on 'release' from self-isolation has been very confusing and, at times, contradictory. Our best interpretation of the guidance is as follows:

- The first day of symptoms (or of a positive test if asymptomatic) is 'Day 0'
- LFD testing should begin again on 'Day 6', and self-isolation ends immediately after 2 negative tests 24 hours apart (so a child could return to school on 'Day 7' with two negative tests on the mornings of Days 6 and 7)
- If still testing positive after the 10<sup>th</sup> day of isolation, individuals are still able to return to school (unless they remain unwell) irrespective of still testing positive, as they are very unlikely to still be infectious.

In one recent change to the guidance, individuals should no longer wait 90 days to re-start LFD testing; they should start twice-weekly testing again after they've completed their isolation period.

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#### **Headteacher: Mr T W Inman, BSc**

Gordano School, St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR

Tel: 01275 842606

Email: [mailbox@gordanoschool.org.uk](mailto:mailbox@gordanoschool.org.uk) [www.gordanoschool.org.uk](http://www.gordanoschool.org.uk)

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## Remote learning resources

As previously explained, remote learning resources have been set up for students in Years 7-11 who are self-isolating. All students were set a task on Firefly on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January with instructions on how to access these resources, and they are also available from the 'virtual school' link on the school website.

## Managing staff absences

We are carefully monitoring staff absence levels due to Covid, which have been rising gradually through the week. We are expecting that this trend will continue, and whilst we have a number of contingency plans to enable all students to remain in school, I am expecting that there will be some disruption to in-school learning in coming weeks due to staff absence.

As previously stated, we will avoid impact on exam yeargroups, seek to minimise impact wherever possible. We will inform you as early as possible, although the dynamic nature of the situation means that this is not always possible to give significant notice. Please consider any arrangements that you would need to make should 'learning from home' be needed at short notice.

## Keeping children safe online

The Children's Commissioner has launched a guide for parents and carers on supporting their children to stay safe online. "*The things I wish my parents had known*" draws together advice from 16 to 21 year olds on how parents should manage tricky conversations around sexual harassment and access to inappropriate content, including pornography.

The guide can be found by following this link:

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/talking-to-your-child-about-online-sexual-harassment-a-guide-for-parents/>

We strongly recommend that parents view this guide and talk to their children about online sexual harassment and staying safe online.

With best wishes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Inman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Inman  
Headteacher