



31 December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Following the announcements made by the government last night, the leadership team of the school met this morning and we are now able to update you further following Mr Johnson's letter sent on 30 December.

Monday 4 January – Friday 8 January

All year groups will be working remotely at home, apart from those students that attend the school's special provision (these students will access online provision from school).

There will be a delayed start to Monday 4 January, with the day starting at **11am** with an assembly with the Head of Year and then lessons starting from period 3. A google meet link will be placed in the Year Group Google classroom for the assembly.

Students in Years 7-10 will follow their normal timetable and will have all work set on their Google classrooms. They will need to submit all work through this platform. All work will be set asynchronously (not live).

Students in Year 11 will receive a mix of synchronous (live) and asynchronous lessons. Students will follow their normal timetable and synchronous lessons will take place periods 2 & 4 via Google Meet.

Staff will be preparing the school to implement the Covid testing programme and we aim to start this process during this week. Please see below for further information on the mass testing programme.

Monday 11 January – Friday 15 January

Students in year 11 will return to school for face-to-face teaching.

Students in years 7-10 will continue to stay at home and work remotely, apart from those attending the special provision. Students will follow their normal timetable and will receive a mix of synchronous and asynchronous lessons. Synchronous lessons will take place periods 1, 3 & 5 each day via Google Meet.

During this week, we will further implement the Covid testing programme and you will be sent information about when your child should attend.

If you have not already done so and your child/(ren) is/are eligible to attend our special provision, please complete the form [here](#). This form can also be used to request a food parcel for the period that they are out of school if your child is eligible for free school meals. Please can I request that you complete this form by **Friday 1 January 2021.**

You have my absolute assurance that we will do whatever we can to support your child and minimise the disruption to learning, which will be an inevitable result of this staggered start to the year. If you have any problems accessing online learning, then please let us know via meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org as we may be able to help.

Parents of Year 8 Students

In my letter of 16 December, I detailed the process this year for choosing options. As students are working remotely for the next two weeks we have moved the year 8 Assessment week back a week. This will now take place from Monday 18 January to Friday 22 January.

Covid Testing Programme

We are working to keep our school as safe as possible. You may have heard that testing for those without coronavirus symptoms is beginning across the country using new, quicker COVID-19 tests known as 'lateral flow tests'. Please note that these tests are designed to identify positive cases where no symptoms are displayed. If your child is showing symptoms, you should arrange a test in the usual way and isolate until the results are known. Please ensure that you contact us on merattendance@maideneleghtrust.org to inform us of any such cases.

Along with the other protective measures we are taking, the lateral flow tests will help staff and students to remain in school safely. Up to one third of people who have coronavirus experience no symptoms. By testing we will help to stop the virus spread and help to keep our school open as safely as possible. The test is voluntary, but I would encourage everyone to take it.

The tests are self-administered and those taking the test will be supervised by trained staff. The 'lateral flow' tests are quick and easy using a swab of your nose and throat. For under 18s, staff can oversee the swab process.

Results (which take around half an hour from testing) will be shared directly with staff and students participating. Where participants are under 16, parents or legal guardians will also be informed. If the lateral flow test result is positive, a Covid test (referred to as a 'PCR' test) will need to be undertaken and the household will need to isolate until the result is known.

We are assured that these tests work - in validation studies conducted by Oxford University and Public Health England, they were shown to be as accurate in identifying a case as a PCR test (99.68% specificity). The tests have lower sensitivity but they are better at picking up cases when a person has higher viral load, hence the need to test frequently.

A leaflet explaining the testing process is available [here](#). There is also an explainer video on lateral flow devices available [here](#).

Our privacy notice in respect of the data we will hold about you re the test centre operations is available on our website.

The programme will consist of 2 main phases:

- 1) Mass testing of staff and students before the full return to school on Monday 18 January;
- 2) Testing of close contacts of confirmed cases – staff and students identified as close contacts can choose to be tested on a daily basis over 7 days instead of needing to isolate.

For the initial phase, we will be testing all staff and students who want to participate from the week commencing 4 January 2021. Everybody participating in the programme will need to be tested twice with a 3-5 day period in between tests. The exact timing of tests will be confirmed early that week and is dependent on the delivery of tests and training materials, which have been promised for 4 January 2021. We currently envisage that testing of staff and special provision students will commence on Wednesday 6 January and that Year 11 students will be

tested on Thursday 7 January and Monday 11 January. Other year groups will be invited in during the remote learning period to be tested. We will share details of the planned timetable for this as soon as possible.

Please complete the form [here](#) to provide consent for your child/(ren) to be tested. Please note that if your child is over 16, they can complete the form themselves having discussed participation in the programme with a parent/guardian. We are in the process of completing a risk assessment for the test centre operations and will share this with you in due course. Please ensure that you include details of the best number to reach you on as in the event of a positive result, students will need to be collected urgently. **Please can you complete the form by 4pm on Monday 4 January.**

We are looking for volunteers to help with the testing in school. If you have DBS clearance and are willing to volunteer, please email the school office MERoffice@maidenerleghtrust.org. Experience in schools or having a nursing/medical background would be a bonus, but is not essential.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Gibbs
Deputy Headteacher

