

Friday 26th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

In the past three weeks, we have successfully navigated our way through a torrent of rapid changes. As always, we have responded calmly and adapted successfully. We have earned an Easter break to recharge and restart revitalised next term. This term has been very intense; following the great effort put into blended learning we have transitioned back to face-to-face learning. In addition, we have proficiently met and overcome the added challenges of Lateral Flow testing, face masks and, for our Year 10 and 11 pupils, the start of assessments to provide every opportunity for them to evidence their GCSE grading later next term.

I would like to thank you all for your support with both the testing programme in school and subsequently at home. It has helped us identify a couple of cases quickly over the past few weeks and ensure we can rapidly break the chain of transmission, through close contact tracing.

If a child tests positive at home there are **four** important steps you must take and these are outlined below.

1. Record the result using the www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result
2. Contact the school attendance team **immediately**, attendance@oakwood.ac, including at the weekend. You should inform them of any other pupils they have had contact with in the last 48 hours, before and after school or during breaktime. We will use our seating plans to identify close contacts in class.
3. Book a PCR test to confirm the home test.
4. Self-isolate as a household until the result of the PCR test is confirmed.

If the PCR test is positive, you will be advised by test and trace to continue to isolate. If it is negative, your child can return to school and the isolation period ends.

As a school, we will make contact with all pupils who have been in close contact with someone who has a positive home test result and will ask them to self-isolate. Pupils should remain in isolation for ten days, or until we make contact with you to confirm that a negative PCR test result has been returned. This applies to all close contacts, even if their own home test was negative, as there is a five day incubation period for the virus. When I wrote to you in December, the government had originally planned for close contacts to receive daily testing in school, if they were close contacts, however, this approach was withdrawn in early January.

Your child should also **continue testing twice a week, at home, throughout the Easter school holidays**. We will be sending home extra kits for the Easter holiday before the term ends.

This does not replace testing for those with symptoms. If you have symptoms, you must self-isolate immediately, book a PCR test and follow national guidelines.

A member of the Inspire Trust

Reporting Results

It is really important that results of tests are reported online straight away, even if your child's result is negative or void. It's easy to do at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result.

Results can also be reported via telephone by calling 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm.

If your child tests positive between Saturday 27th March and Thursday 31st March, please inform us by emailing attendance@oakwood.ac. Stating your child's name, the date they received the positive result and the names of any pupils they have had close contact with in the 48 hours before taking the test or developing symptoms. This will allow us to carry out the close contact tracing we are required to do.

If any pupils are absent on Friday, we will call parents and ask them to collect a test kit from reception so the pupil can test over the Easter before they return to school. We will continue to send the email reminders to pupils and parents.

Testing for parents, households and bubbles twice a week

A reminder that regular rapid testing is now also available for parents, their households and support or childcare bubbles. The government is encouraging all families to participate in twice weekly testing to help stop the spread.

Parents and other adults in the household can access tests by:

- ordering tests online www.gov.uk/order-school-household-tests
- getting an assisted test at work, if it is available;
- attending a test site to get tested (where you will be able to see how to take the test) or pick up tests to do at home.

To find out more on school household testing visit [Households and bubbles of pupils, students and staff of schools and colleges: get rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rapid-lateral-flow-tests-for-school-households)

PCR and LFD testing during Ramadan

The British Islamic Medical Association's view is that taking polymerase chain reaction (PCR) or lateral flow device (LFD) tests during Ramadan **does not invalidate the fast**.

People may feel more comfortable doing the tests when they are not fasting. In this case, with the move to home-testing, tests can be carried out at any time.

Ramadan Arrangements

Looking forward to the return on Monday 12th April, I would like to recognise that many of our community will be beginning the month of Ramadan. Ramadan is predicted to start around 12th April and will end around 12th May. When Ramadan ends many want to celebrate Eid-al-fitr. As always we cannot formally sanction absence, as this celebration is not deemed a national holiday, however the school does understand that some families will need to make arrangements to return to school after the end of Ramadan.

the school understands that many families will want to spend time together and, as a supportive gesture, we will recognise one day of absence for religious observance. Any extra days will have to

be recorded as unauthorised. Thank you for your understanding.

Whilst at school, we want to support our pupils who will be observing the fast by providing them with a space they can go away from the regular dining areas. The challenges of year group bubbles mean that we have had to modify our plans from previous years. This year pupils who are in the dining room for their break will be able to access the Main Hall that will be 'food free', with the exception of the first break for Year 9, but these pupils have access to outside areas at this time and will be able to access the hall in their second break.

In the Main Hall we will make provision for boys and girls to be able to have separate spaces for quiet reflection and these areas will be supervised by staff.

As you know, education is absolutely central to Islam, and as a consequence, we expect all pupils, including any who are fasting during this time, to attend every school day and to follow their normal lessons. Whether children are fasting or not, we would expect all pupils to approach all activities, especially those involving physical activity in warm weather, with a degree of caution. This may include wearing appropriate head covering and clothing where necessary, and being prepared to take a small amount of water if feeling unwell. On particularly hot days all Physical Education lessons will be planned with reference to the temperature and the knowledge that there may be pupils who are fasting. If children are intending to fast it is essential that they prepare by drinking and eating outside the times of the fast, particularly in the morning before they attend school.

I appreciate your support and understanding around this issue. If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to make contact with me c.ecclest@oakwood.ac or Mr Willey s.willey@oakwood.ac, Assistant Headteacher.

We wish all our families the very best during this period of religious observance: Ramadan Kareem.

Free School Meals

I am pleased to announce that families who receive free school meals, will receive Tesco vouchers over the Easter break. This has been supported by RMBC, who has provided funding to schools to support this through the COVID Winter Grant Scheme.

They will automatically go into parents' emails on Monday morning at around 9.30am. Those parents without an email address will receive them by post.

School drop off and pick up

Now the school has returned, I'm receiving reports of a number of vehicles dropping children off at the entrance to the Woodside car park. The cars are parking up, sometimes blocking the entrance and, on occasions, moving the cones as they drive into the zone.

In addition, a number of people have been parking on the areas designated by the pedestrian crossing markings as 'no parking zones'.

I would ask that if you do drop and pick up your child by car, that you observe the road traffic

regulations and exercise caution and patience. There is a real risk to pupils being injured and to damage being caused to vehicles. You might also consider meeting your child away from Moorgate Road.

The Local Traffic Enforcement Officers have been alerted to our concerns and will be making regular spot checks to ensure traffic laws are being observed and pedestrians and road users alike are safe.

School site

Throughout the last year we have seen an increase in the number of people who use the school site out of school hours for recreational activities. The numerous lockdowns over the past year is definitely a factor in this. Children playing football and adults walking their dog have been the most common themes. I would like to ask for your help. If your child says that they are going up to school in the evening or at the weekend, or you know of anyone who walks their dog on the fields, please state that Oakwood High School has asked that their site is not be used unless it is for a school activity or private booking. We are currently working with our private security team, South Yorkshire Police and RMBC in this matter. Trespassing is a civil offence. Schools can take civil action through the courts to stop persistent trespass. We work hard to ensure that all of our children have a safe, clean and high quality site for their educational activities. The out of school activities of a small number of 'offenders' do jeopardize this. We would like to work with our community so that this can be avoided.

Year 10 and 11 After School Support Sessions

When we return after the Easter break, in addition to preparing for assessments in lessons, Year 11 and Year 10 (English Literature) will have the opportunity to attend a range of after school support sessions. A link to the timetable can be found [here](#).

We will also be organising our very own "Oakwood Inter-House Olympics" where all year group bubbles will compete in a variety of sporting events throughout the summer term at the end of each school day. We are particularly excited to be able to once again offer our pupils the chance to take part in representative sport and I will share more information about this on our return in April.

Important dates next half-term:

Tuesday 13th April	Year 8 and 11 Virtual Subject Evening
Wednesday 21st April	Year 7 and 9 Virtual Subject Evening Google Meet invites will be emailed on the day to your child/ children by their teachers.
Friday 23rd April	Year 8 Option choice deadline

I would like to finish by once again thanking you all for your ongoing support during these unusual and challenging times. I urge our pupils to take time to rest and recharge their batteries, the demands of learning in lockdown and return to school full-time cannot be underestimated. I hope you are all able to start to enjoy a little more freedom and reconnect with a wider group of friends and family, albeit socially distanced and outside. The future is beginning to look brighter and when we return on **Monday 12th April**, we will continue to work hard with our pupils to build their resilience and get them back into the routine of learning together again.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Eccles - Head of School

Letter translation is available.

Ak potrebujete pomoc s prekladom, kludne mi napíšte email a ja vám zavolám pri prvej vhodnej príležitosti. Moja emailová adresa je h.vereczy@oakwood.ac

اگر آپ کو اس خط کا اردو ترجمہ چاہیے تو براہ کرم اوپر دیئے گئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔ شکریہ
s.khan@oakwood.ac

