

St Augustine's RC High School



Newsletter
1st April 2021

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Dear families,

As we reach the end of term, we would like to thank you for the support that you have given to the school over a testing term. It has been a joy to have a full school once again, with pupils adapting so well to the wearing of masks in class as well as undertaking the lateral flow tests in school and now at home. A large proportion of pupils are also now delighted that ball games have resumed on the yard! After an extended period of remote learning, followed by the demands of returning to school with additional restrictions, I am sure that everybody is looking forward to a well-deserved holiday.

We are thankful that numbers of positive cases are very low and hopefully this will continue next term. To maintain a safe environment pupils are requested to continue with twice-weekly testing throughout the Easter holidays and new testing kits have been issued (packs have been posted to those self-isolating).

Proximity Contacts

We have received a number of queries about the requirement to self-isolate due to contact with other pupils when pupils have their own negative result from lateral flow tests. It is currently still a requirement to self-isolate even if a pupil has a negative lateral flow (or PCR) test. Please find overleaf the latest guidance from Public Health England that confirms this position.

Contact Tracing over the Easter Holiday

Please inform school of a positive case if either symptoms or a positive home Lateral Flow Test (which must be confirmed by a PCR test within 2 days) occur within 48 hours of being in school i.e. by 3.15pm on Saturday 3rd April. Where this is the case, you are asked to assist in identifying close contacts due to the risk of being infectious while in school. Please email head@sarchs.com to report a positive test.

Free School Meals

The county council has received £4.2m in funding from the government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme to deliver a range of school holiday activities for children and young people between the ages of 4-16 who are eligible for a free school meal. This replaces the Free School Meal voucher scheme that has been in place over recent holidays. Details can be found here <https://discovercamp.youthaction.org.uk>

Holy Week Mass

Our thanks to Father Tim who celebrated the Holy Week Mass at St Peter's, Stonyhurst, which was live-streamed around school on Wednesday. Well done to all who contributed to the Mass and for pupils who completed the postcards on the theme "In which area of your life do you most need God's blessing?"



Latest Guidance from Public Health England on Self-Isolation

Please find below the information that relates to self-isolation and contact tracing following a confirmed COVID19 test result. Schools have a duty to follow these procedures, which are in place to minimise the chance of further spread of the virus. Self-isolation for close contacts is required even if a pupil has their own negative lateral flow test.

If someone has had a positive Lateral Flow Test (LFD), do we class this as a confirmed case?

Yes. If someone has had a positive test, whether it be a Lateral Flow Test or PCR test with or without symptoms we would class them as a confirmed case.

The only exception to this is members of staff or students who had a positive Lateral Flow Test using a home testing kit. People who test positive using one of these home testing kits are still advised to seek a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours of the Lateral Flow Test. However, we will still start contact tracing from the positive Lateral Flow Test.

Should I advise someone who has had a positive Lateral Flow Test to seek a PCR test?

No. These tests no longer require a PCR test to confirm infection.

The only exception to this is members of staff or students who had a positive Lateral Flow Test using a home testing kit. People who test positive using one of these home testing kits are still advised to seek a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours of the Lateral Flow Test. However, we will still start contact tracing from the positive Lateral Flow Test.

Someone in the education setting has had a positive Lateral Flow test, what should I do?

They should be advised to self-isolate for 10 days. We should also go through the relevant contact tracing information with the caller.

If someone who had a positive Lateral Flow Test then gets a negative PCR test, can they and their contacts stop self-isolating?

No. Anyone who tests positive using a Lateral Flow Test will need to self-isolate for 10 days. They do not need to seek a confirmatory PCR test but if for any reason they do take another test (either PCR or Lateral Flow test) which comes back as negative they will still need to complete their period of self-isolation.

The only exception to this is members of staff or students who had a positive Lateral Flow Test using a home testing kit. People who test positive using one of these home testing kits are still advised to seek a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours of the Lateral Flow Test. In this case only if the PCR test comes back as negative and the person has no Covid symptoms the case and contacts can end their period of self-isolation.

Do I need to tell people who have been in contact with someone who had a positive Lateral Flow test to self-isolate?

Yes, contact tracing will start when there has been a positive Lateral Flow Test.

A negative PCR or LFD result should not be read as a means to relax or ignore social distancing or other virus prevention measures intended to reduce transmission – rapid testing is an *additional* tool that contributes to reducing risk.

WEBSITES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ANNA FREUD Mental Health Advice for Parents www.annafreud.org

KOOTH – online counselling service <https://www.kooth.com/>

MIND – for better Mental Health www.mind.org.uk

NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk

5 STEPS TO MENTAL HEALTH – www.nhs.uk

Mental Health Check-up website for 13-25 year olds www.lancashireyp.wearewithyou.org.uk

HEALTHY YOUNG MINDS – variety of advice, guidance and support related to children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. www.healthyyoungmindspsc.co.uk

EVERY MIND MATTERS – Mental Health resources and tailored advice as well as practical tips on sleep and self care. www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/

The mental health 24/7 helpline number is now available across East Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen for families and carers of children and young people, or children and young people themselves, who require access to mental health support or feel in crisis. For help and support please contact the following number: 0800 915 4640 or text 'Hello' to 07862 022846.

Parents' Evenings

We will be running virtual Parents' Evenings using the School Cloud booking system for Years 7, 8 and 10 next term. Bookings will run from 3.45pm to 7.15pm.

Year 7 - Thursday 20th May

Year 8 - Thursday 10th June

Year 10 - Thursday 6th May

Details of how to book and how to join the video meeting will be sent nearer the time.

Year 11 Checkpoints

Year 11 pupils and families have received the schedule for assessment checkpoints for next term. Pupils will have already completed a number of Checkpoint 2 assessments and should prepare for the remainder of these on our return after the holiday. Checkpoint 3 will be the final opportunity for assessments to take place and these are planned prior to the May half term. We are still awaiting guidance on the leaving date for Year 11 and plans for our Leavers' Mass will follow once this is confirmed. This is also true for the Leavers' Ball and we will let pupils and families know as soon as we can confirm whether the event can go ahead.

Return for the Summer Term

School re-opens on Monday 19th April—it is **Week 2** on the timetable. Summer uniform is allowed from this date and it is no longer compulsory for pupils to wear jumpers. We are aware that many families have had difficulties in buying new uniform due to the current restrictions. Hopefully, over the Easter holiday, more retail outlets will open to allow new items to be bought. In particular, please remember to buy appropriate footwear - black trainers (often marketed as school shoes), boots and suede or canvas shoes are not allowed. Please also make sure pupils arrive with the correct equipment as it is not possible to lend out items of stationery, especially in Art lessons where pencils, sharpeners and coloured pencils are required.

Wishing you all a Happy and Holy Easter

