



Clarity Independent School

18th December 2021

COVID Testing and Arrangements Over the Christmas Holidays and into the New Term

Dear parents / care-givers,

In light of the new Omicron variant, the need to continue testing and reporting test results is more important than ever. I have been asked to pass on the following information from the Department for Education and to encourage:

- all young people and staff to vaccinate, to keep them, their friends, family members and teachers as safe as possible. As we approach the winter holidays, take up of the booster jab is critical for staff and eligible students to protect everyone from serious illness and provide the best defense possible. Over the Christmas holidays, 12-15 year olds who have not been vaccinated can book an appointment out of school on the [NHS booking system](#) and from 20th December, second doses can be booked. Further information on [vaccination for 12 to 15 year olds](#) is available on the NHS website.
- all staff and students of secondary age and above continue to test, and importantly report those test results, twice-weekly over the holidays and into the new term in January. If they test positive, they should self-isolate and [order a PCR test](#) to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests for the 7 days, and only need to isolate if it is positive.
- parents and other visitors to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before attending a school or college event
- all secondary schools to prepare and encourage their pupils to take one COVID-19 test on-site on return in January and all other staff and eligible students to take one self-test at home either the evening or morning before they return to their education setting in January before continuing with twice-weekly at home testing



Approved Assessor for
Disabled Students'
Allowance



Guild Member
Assessment Practising
Certificate holder



INPP
Practitioner



AMBDA Status

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19

From 14 December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 was introduced. All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take an LFD test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating and report the results through the [online reporting system](#) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow [national guidance](#). Pupils opting out of testing must isolate for the full 10 days. (Children under five years old do not need to take part in daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 and do not need to isolate.) This approach should be adopted over the Christmas holiday and on return in January.

Ventilation in schools

Recently, the department has been rolling out CO2 monitors to education settings. From the start of term in January, we will be monitoring the levels of CO2 in teaching areas and actioning increased ventilation in those necessary.

Face Coverings

In education and childcare settings in community premises, adults and children are required to wear face coverings again, unless they are exempt from the mandatory requirement. All our pupils are exempt due to their SEN and the need to see facial expression in order to communicate; therefore, they and staff do not need to wear face coverings around school. (The same applies to public transport.)

Contingency plans

We will continue to monitor our contingency plans to ensure that closures / limiting children's attendance are only actioned when absolutely necessary and unavoidable, and only as a last resort if isolations and illness render staffing levels reduced to the point where it becomes unsafe for pupils to be in school.

From all the staff at Clarity, we hope you all have a very safe and happy Christmas and New Year!

Yours sincerely,



Debbie Hanson, Head Teacher and Director
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Member of the Dyslexia Guild
Associate Member of SASC (SpLD Assessment Standards Committee)