



16 July 2021

End-of-Year Letter from the Head of School

Dear Parents and Carers

We arrive at the end of an academic year that has presented all students, parents, carers and staff with an unprecedented level of challenge. School closures, self-isolation, face-masks, and a cyber-attack are just a small number of the difficulties we have encountered this year; difficulties, however, that we should all be proud of working together as a community to overcome and learn from.

We have recently collated the views of students, parents, carers and staff via a number of online surveys. Such feedback is imperative to ensuring that all stakeholders have their voice heard and play their part in making our school even better. Through such surveys, the voice of our Toot Hill School family has provided the school with excellent feedback and I will report on resultant changes early next-term. Next year we will be providing many further opportunities for all our stakeholders to provide regular feedback to the school on a whole range of school issues. We value your opinions greatly and we look forward to hearing about them next year via both online means and a healthy discourse on the school site.

Change to the Autumn Term Start Days for 2021-22

The government has recently provided schools with updated guidance on how asymptomatic testing should take place in schools at the start of the Autumn term. We will re-open our Asymptomatic Test Sites (ATS) in anticipation of pupils returning in the Autumn (including the new Year 7s). Students with consent provided will be required to take two on-site LFD tests (as opposed to three back in March), three to five days apart prior to the start of school.

Year Group	Asymptomatic Test 1 Date	Asymptomatic Test 2 Date
7	Tuesday 31 August 2021	Friday 3 September 2021
8	Thursday 2 September 2021	Tuesday 8 September 2021
9	Wednesday 1 September 2021	Monday 6 September 2021
10	Wednesday 1 September 2021	Monday 6 September 2021
11	Tuesday 31 August 2021	Friday 3 September 2021
12	Tuesday 31 August 2021	Friday 3 September 2021
13	Wednesday 1 September 2021	Monday 6 September 2021

Asymptomatic testing will take place in the Sports Hall. We will only be conducting tests for students where families have provided consent. We strongly recommend that families do provide consent to ensure a safer start to the year for our community. To provide consent, please use this link:

<https://www.toothillschool.co.uk/consent>

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We will send further details in August, including a time window to attend the Sport Hall for a test. Note that new Year 7 students will also have their finger prints recorded on the second testing day for use in our cashless school canteen.

I apologise for any inconvenience caused but this testing regime does mean that the start dates for September have now changed for all year groups:

Year Group	Start Date
7	<i>Induction Day Monday 6 September 2021 (11:45 am finish)</i>
7	Tuesday 7 September 2021
8	Wednesday 8 September 2021
9	Wednesday 8 September 2021
10	Wednesday 8 September 2021
11	Tuesday 7 September 2021
12	Tuesday 7 September 2021
13	Wednesday 8 September 2021

COVID Safety Measures from Monday 19 July 2021

On Monday, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced that Step 4 will go ahead on the Monday 19 July. The sections below outline operational safety guidance provided by the Department for Education (in italics) and the actions of Toot Hill School to prioritise student and staff safety whilst facilitating the highest standards of teaching and learning.

Bubbles

At Step 4, it is no longer necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'), including Summer school provision, unless there is an outbreak where it would be necessary to re-introduce them. Schools may wish to consider retaining their bubbles until the end of the Summer term.

Assemblies can resume, and schools no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

Toot Hill School actions:

- We are to retain our bubbles for the remainder of this Summer term
- Assemblies will not resume until September 2021
- From September onwards, bubbles are no longer required therefore we will operate as normal, prior to COVID protocols being implemented
- From September onwards, we will no longer continue with staggered end times
- From September onwards, we will conduct assemblies in the usual way
- From September onwards, all catering provisions will return to usual operation i.e. grab and go is no longer required, year groups can mix and children can remain seated at tables
- From September, staff rooms and localised kitchen facilities will open and operate as usual

Contact Tracing

From 19 July 2021, contact tracing is no longer required by schools ie if there is a positive case it will be managed through NHS Test and Trace rather than through schools. Schools may, however, be contacted by Test and Trace if they need support in identifying who the close contacts are.

From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case but instead will be required to take a PCR test.

Toot Hill School actions:

- We will continue with contact tracing, identifying any close contacts as they are now, up to and including 18 July 2021.
- From 19 July 2021, we are no longer required to initiate contact tracing and identify close contacts as NHS Test and Trace will manage this directly with the positive individual and their family. Guidance from the NHS about contact tracing changes can be found at the end of this document.
- We will continue to record seating plans (both pre and post Step 4) in support of the Test and Trace process in the unlikely event we are contacted to support identifying close contacts.
- We strongly encourage children / families to take a PCR test if instructed by Test and Trace to do so.

Face Coverings

Face coverings will no longer be advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

The Prime Minister also said 'we expect and recommend people wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces where you come into contact with those you don't normally meet such as on public transport'. Our operational guidance for settings now recommends that face coverings are worn on dedicated transport to school or college when prevalence is high. This will be kept under review.

Toot Hill School actions:

- As of Step 4 on Monday, students and staff are allowed to use their own discretion in relation to whether they wish to wear a face covering within school.
- From September 2021, students and staff are allowed to use their own discretion in relation to whether they wish to wear a face covering within school.

- From Monday 19 to Wednesday 21 July 2021, students must continue to wear face masks on buses (unless exempt) because of the recent increase in cases in school. We will review this position before September.
- We will be accommodating of any recommendations from Public Health where there is an outbreak and are advised to re-introduce face masks within their setting.

Systems of Control

Schools should:

- *Ensure good hygiene – hand and respiratory hygiene and PPE.*
- *Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes - ‘You should put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.’*
- *Keep spaces well ventilated – maintain existing measures in relation to ventilation.*
- *Follow Public Health advice – testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases.*

Toot Hill School actions:

- From 19 July 2021, we will continue with the existing measures in relation to the above
- In-day cleaning regimes will continue from Step 4, until October half-term where they will be reviewed by the Trust based on more updated guidance at the time.

Asymptomatic Testing

Over the summer, staff and secondary pupils should continue to test regularly if they are attending settings that remain open, such as summer schools. All secondary school pupils should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term.

Settings may commence testing from 3 working days before the start of term and can stagger return of pupils across the first week to manage this. Pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed.

Secondary schools should also retain a small asymptomatic testing site (ATS) on-site.

There is no need for primary age pupils (those in year 6 and below) to test over the summer period. They will be offered the 2 tests at an ATS at the beginning of the autumn term when they start at their secondary school as a new year 7.

Toot Hill School actions:

- We will only provide two-weekly home test kits for those staff and students who are attending our school throughout the summer.

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- We will plan for the re-opening of their Asymptomatic Test Sites (ATS) in anticipation of pupils returning in the Autumn (including the new Year 7s). This should be based on two on-site LFD tests (as opposed to three back in March), three to five days apart.
- Consent is required in advance from parents and carers.
- We will continue to provide home test kits following completion of the ATS process.
- Once we have completed our on-site testing, we will continue with a small ATS provision as has been the case since 8 March.

PCR Tests

Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate and undertake a PCR test. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil / staff member can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Toot Hill School action:

- We will continue to communicate to parents and carers the updated guidance in relation to a positive LFD test and obtaining a PCR test.

I would finally like to thank you for your support of the school over this last year. On a number of occasions this year we have called upon your patience and understanding and you have never failed to show anything but kindness and support.

I hope you enjoy a fantastic summer break with your family where children can once again savour activities without constraint. Following a year of such great restriction, next term I look forward to welcoming our students back in to a bustling school with a plethora of learning opportunities available to them once again.

Yours sincerely



Dr C Eardley
Head of School

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Changes to Contact Tracing in Education and Childcare Settings

As you know, the Prime Minister announced on 12 July that Step 4 of the roadmap would go ahead on 19 July.

One of the key changes that will take place from 19 July is that education and childcare settings will no longer be asked to conduct routine contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with either the positive case – or in the case of children – the parents, carers or guardian of the positive case to identify close contacts.

NHS Test and Trace already manages the contact tracing process for the rest of society – including children who have recorded a positive PCR test – and has expertise in supporting people to identify close contacts.

This information sets out in more detail below how that process will work and what you need to do if your child tests positive for COVID-19.

Self-isolating and taking a test

1. If your child has symptoms, they and other members of the household should self-isolate – and you should inform their education or childcare setting. You should immediately order a PCR test for them. If the PCR result is negative, they and other members of their household can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the PCR result is positive, they, other members of their household and any close contacts identified by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the onset of symptoms.
2. If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow device (LFD) test, they and other members of the household should self-isolate – and you should inform their education or childcare setting. You should immediately order a confirmatory PCR test. If the confirmatory test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they and other members of their household can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the confirmatory PCR test is positive (or is taken more than two days after the LFD), other members of their household and any close contacts identified by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the LFD test.
3. PCR tests can be booked online through the NHS Test & Trace website or by calling 119.
4. PCR test results will be recorded with NHS Test and Trace automatically, but you should also communicate the result to the education or childcare setting during term time or summer provision.

Contact tracing

5. If your child gets a positive PCR test result, NHS Test and Trace will contact you, using the details you registered when ordering the PCR test. You and/or your child will be asked a series of specific questions designed to identify who your child has been in close contact with. Being in an education or childcare setting with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact.
6. You will be asked to provide the contact details, if you know them, of any of the individuals – or their parents or guardians – who have been identified as close contacts. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts and provide appropriate instructions or advice (see below).

Self-isolation and/or testing of close contacts

7. At present, anyone identified as a close contact is legally required to self-isolate and must not attend their education or childcare setting (the only exception is if they are participating in a daily contact testing trial). Anyone identified as a non-household close contact by NHS Track and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of their most recent contact with that person. If they live in the same household, they must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of that person developing symptoms (see point 1 above) or, if that person was asymptomatic, the date of their test (see point 2 above). NHS Test and Trace will notify you of the day on which the self-isolation period ends.
8. Close contacts are also advised to take a PCR test. If the test result is negative, they must still complete the full self-isolation period, as the test will not detect all positive cases. If the result is positive, they will need to self-isolate for a further 10 days – and NHS Test and Trace will contact them to identify any close contacts.
9. From 16 August, if the close contact is under 18, they will not have to self-isolate (in line with the policy for fully vaccinated adults) but will be asked to take an PCR test immediately, other than for very young children identified as non-household contacts, and they will not need to self-isolate while awaiting the results of the test. If the PCR test is positive, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch to identify close contacts (see points 5 and 6 above). Further guidance on these changes to self-isolation will be provided shortly.