



14th December 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

Re: Christmas & January Update – Secondary phase

We are finally at the end of what seems to have been an incredibly long term.

Firstly, I want to say a massive thank you for your support over the challenging past few months. You have all adapted and taken on board the changes that we have had to make and supported the school so much during an incredibly tough time.

I am also writing to share some key information with you on the following:

1. End of term arrangements
2. On-site testing in January
3. Face coverings
4. Home testing including information on close contacts & vaccinations
5. Uniform and appearance

1) End of term arrangements

On Wednesday 15th December we will have an optional Christmas Jumper Day. We ask that any pupils wearing a jumper bring a £1 that will be donated to a charity chosen by the College Captains. Pupils must bring their PE kit if needed, in addition to any other resources required on that day. Christmas lunch will also be served on Wednesday costing £2.50. Our Christmas Draw will take place during tutor time on Thursday 16th December. We have some great prizes to give away including 10 Amazon Kindles.

The school day will finish at 12.30pm on Friday 17th December 2021 and pupils will be able to pick up a grab and go lunch before they leave. It is important all pupils attend school on this day. The Academy will be closed to all pupils for the duration of the Christmas holidays.

2) On- site Testing in January:

The Department for Education (DfE) have asked us to resume on-site testing in the first week of January. We will be offering pupils one on-site lateral flow test from Wednesday 5th January to Friday 7th January. It is important that you take note of the test date and the return to school date from the schedule below.

We have previously asked parents whether they give consent, or not, for these tests to be administered by staff and we will continue to fulfil your request. If you did not give consent previously but wish to do so now please let us know.

- If you have previously given consent (in March/September of this year) we can continue to use this. If, however, you wish to opt out of testing for your child, then please
 - Contact us at office@samworth.tgacademy.org.uk to inform us of this, and,
 - Do not send your child in on their year group testing day and send them in on their first lesson day (as per the dates overleaf) instead.





These tests are intended to detect anyone who may have the virus but not show any symptoms, and they will be a key control measure helping us to minimise transmission of the virus. Please see the following timetable which has been planned for pupil testing:

Year 11	1st TEST	Return to school:
	Wednesday 5 th January 9:00am – 11:00am	Thursday 6 th January - 8:30am
Year 10	1st TEST	Return to school:
	Wednesday 5 th January 12:30pm – 2:00pm	Thursday 6 th January - 8:30am
Year 9	1st TEST	Return to school:
	Thursday 6 th January 9:00am – 11:00am	Friday 7 th January – 8.30am
Year 8	1st TEST	Return to school:
	Thursday 6 th January 12:30pm -2:00pm	Friday 7 th January – 8.30am
Year 7	1st TEST	Return to school:
	Friday 7 th January 9:00am – 11:00am	Monday 10 th January – 8.30am

3) Face coverings

We will be asking all staff and pupils in year 7 and above, to continue to wear face coverings in communal areas, unless they are exempt. Pupils (in year 7 or above) should continue to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport, unless they are exempt.

Pupils may, of course, continue to wear their face coverings in classrooms and outside areas if they feel more comfortable doing so, although this won't be mandatory. We would be grateful if could provide your child with a supply of clean, plain face coverings and a plastic bag to store them in.

4) Home Testing

Home testing is a vital measure in stopping the spread of the virus. It is important that pupils continue to test twice weekly over the holidays using lateral flow device (LFD). We have issued LFD test to each child where required to support you with this. If you did require more LFD tests during the Christmas break, these are available to order for free on GOV.UK or at your local pharmacy.

Contact tracing and isolation

The current guidance on contact tracing and isolation remains in place. Any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant should take a lateral flow test every day for a week.

We have not had any confirmed or suspected cases of the new Omicron variant at school yet. If we are informed of any confirmed cases, then we will be required to identify any close contacts and these pupils / staff would be required to take a lateral flow test every day for a week.



Vaccination

All eligible staff and pupils aged 12 and over are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters. Vaccines are our best defence against COVID-19. They help protect young people and adults, and benefit those around them. Vaccination makes people less likely to catch the virus and less likely to pass it on.

To book a vaccine, please visit this [website](#).

5) Uniform and appearance – preparation for January

Our weekly standard checks indicate that the vast majority of pupils meet our uniform standards. They have been a credit to you and our school. In preparation for January, I want to highlight a few items which you can support us with by purchasing over the break. They would also make good Christmas presents!

1. Footwear:

- Shoes should be plain black leather with a maximum heel height of 5cm and maximum sole thickness of 2cm (heel is measured from the ground to the welt up the back of the heel).
- No coloured logo. Boots are also not allowed.

2. Trousers/skirts:

- Trousers or skirts must be charcoal grey, not black. Skirts should be no shorter than knee length.

3. Socks and tights:

- Tights and socks should be dark grey or black.

4. Grey slippers/jumpers:

- We have looked at this carefully with parents over the last few weeks. ***Grey slippers or grey V-neck jumpers are now optional; however, school grey slippers/jumpers must be the only alternative item. Other jumpers, hoodies, jackets must not be worn.***

5. Hairstyles and piercings:

- Pupils are not allowed to wear ear, nose, tongue, or other piercings. If they have any visible piercings or retainers these must be removed before the school day;
- The use of a plaster to cover any of these items is also prohibited;
- Nail varnish and nail or eyelash extensions are not permitted;
- Hair should be kept neat and tidy, and any hair accessories should be small;
- Extreme hairstyles e.g. unnatural colours or patterns are not allowed;
- **Hair or eyebrows should not be shaved with lines.**

Please be mindful of this expectation as pupils tend to get new hairstyles and piercings over the holidays. Pupils will not access any lessons and will remain in isolation until these issues are corrected.

Punctuality is important. Arriving late to school and to lessons is very disruptive for the teacher and other class members. It also means that late pupils miss important input from teachers. Please be aware that AM registration is at **8.30am** so it is important that pupils are in school for **8.25am**. If, for whatever reason, your child will be arriving late please call Students Services to inform them.

I appreciate your continued support and I hope you have a restful half term

Yours sincerely

Mr A Bannon
Associate Principal