



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

3rd September 2021

Reminders & Information about the start of term

Dear Parents / Carers & Pupils

I hope you have had a restful summer and pupils are enjoying the last remaining days of their holiday. Below you will find a reminder about important information related to the start of the new academic year, which was sent out in the newsletter at the end of the summer term. A copy of the full newsletter can be found on our website [here](#).

Please ensure you read this information carefully and your child is fully informed.

Arrangements for the start of term:

We are very much looking forward to a sense of normality returning again and welcoming our new Year 7s who will be joining BFS for three dedicated induction days from Monday 6th September. All other pupils in Years 8-11 officially return to BFS from **Thursday 9th September**. Below you will find important information about our plans for September including our COVID procedures and pupil testing.

The government has provided a useful guide for parents about the proposed changes to COVID-19 restrictions and its implications for schools, this can be found here: [Step 4 update - what parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges](#)

Please be aware that our plans are subject to any potential changes in government guidance and any local restrictions being put in place at the request of Public Health.

From September the government has proposed that:

- It will no longer be necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles') or to keep groups apart as much as possible.
- Face coverings will no longer be advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.
- Schools and colleges will no longer be expected to trace close contacts.
- Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools. Therefore, schools are being asked to set up and run initial testing upon return in September. In addition, your child should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed by the government.

Control measures will now focus on the following areas:

- Ensuring good hygiene for everyone.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.

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- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Contingency planning to including resuming some COVID-19 restrictions in the event of changes to the local or national situation or at the request of Public Health.

The latest version of the school risk assessment can be found on our website [here](#). Working alongside our partners in Public Health, we will continue to review the latest local and national information regarding COVID-19, and act upon the guidance as appropriate. Obviously, this could result in changes to the operational systems and structures outlined. Should this be the case, we will aim to inform parents and carers as soon as possible in order to minimise any disruption.

School day:

As such we are proposing to return to the structure of the school day which was in place before the pandemic and re-establish our culture and routines as well as some of the core aspects of our wider provision.

Please see below for a reminder of timings of the school day:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	Wednesday	Friday
8.25am Morning line up	8.25am Morning line up	08.25am Morning line up
8.30am Morning Meeting	8.30am P1	08.30am Morning Meeting
9.00am Period 1	9.20am P2	09.00am P1
9.50am Period 2	10.10am P3	09.50am P2
10.40am Break	11.00am Break	10.40am Break
10.58am End of break time. Line Up	11.20am P4	11.00am P3
11.00am Period 3	12.10pm P5	11.50am P4
11.50am Period 4	13.00pm 1st Lunch and DEAR 1	12.40pm 1st Lunch and DEAR 1
12.40pm 1st Lunch and DEAR 1	13.30pm 2nd Lunch and DEAR 2	13.10pm 2nd Lunch and DEAR 2
13.10pm 2nd Lunch and DEAR 2	14.00pm P6 Electives / Catch Up	13.40pm P5
13.40pm Period 5	15.30pm Tutor time	14.30pm P6
14.30pm Period 6	16.00pm School day ends. Corrections start	15.20pm Golden time / Catch Up / Loss of Golden time
15.20pm Prep		16.00pm School day ends.
16.00pm School day ends. Corrections start		

- All pupils will need to arrive at school by 08:25, we will continue to use two gates as entrances to facilitate handwashing.
- Pupils will continue to wash their hands upon arrival at school, and handwashing facilities will be accessible at break and lunch.
- Pupils will continue to come into school wearing PE kit on the day that they have PE lessons or a sport elective.
- The structure of the school day will return to that which was in place before the pandemic (see table above). Pupils will no longer need to be kept in bubbles or separate year groups
- After school HW club will be reinstated and run daily from the end of the school day to 17:30.
- Catch up will return run on Wednesday and Friday afternoons to support pupils whose attendance means they need more support and dedicated study time.
- Golden Time will return on Friday from 15:20 onwards (leaving early for Golden Time will continue to be a privilege to be earned week by week and is not automatic).
- Pupils must wash their hands thoroughly before leaving the house each morning and upon returning at the end of the day. This should be done using soapy warm water and for at least 20 seconds
- We will ensure good respiratory hygiene, by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach at school
- We will keep classrooms well ventilated by keeping doors and windows open, where possible, to enable air to circulate
- Pupils should bring with them their basic equipment (including pencil case, pens, ruler, pencil, calculator, geometry set) and **a pack of tissues at all times, kept in their blazer pocket.**

COVID symptoms:

It remains the case that anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or who has tested positive must not attend school.

If your child develops any of the following symptoms:

- A high temperature – this means feeling hot to touch on the chest or back
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

You must notify the school immediately (please follow the usual absence reporting system by ringing reception by 8:15am) and arrange a PCR test by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by phoning 119. If your child has symptoms you should book a PCR test and notify the school of the result of the test by emailing covid@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk. If the test comes back negative, pupils can return to school once they are well.

Please note that if a pupil or member of staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 whilst at school, the individual concerned will be sent home. Families will be asked to arrange a PCR test for their child and to share the results with us by emailing covid@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk.

Please note that contact tracing is no longer carried out by the school, but by NHS Test and Trace. Contacts who are double vaccinated (i.e., have had their second vaccine at least two weeks prior to coming into contact with the positive case), and/or under 18, are no longer required to self-isolate. Instead, they will be advised to take a PCR test, and will only need to self-isolate should this test prove to be positive. Any unvaccinated close contacts aged 18 or over still need to self-isolate for 10 days. Please see the attached flowchart provided by Bedford Borough as further information and guidance for families.

Testing upon return in September:

On returning to school in September all pupils will be offered a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) COVID-19 test. By testing we will help to reduce the spread of the virus and break transmission links by identifying those that may be carrying the virus unknowingly. I am strongly encouraging all pupils to be tested to help keep our school community as safe as possible following the summer break.

The first round of testing for Year 8-Year 11 pupils will take place on a staggered basis prior to their official return to school on Thursday 9th September. In total pupils will be offered two Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests spaced three to five days apart. This is so pupils have undertaken some testing in a supervised setting, and have had the chance to re-familiarise themselves with self-swabbing before home testing kits are once again provided.

In order for your child to be tested in school you must provide your consent. If you have previously completed a consent form then no further action is required. However, if you have not previously provided one please complete the form and return via email to shaskins@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk. The form can be found here: [Testing Consent letter](#)

If you no longer wish for your child to be tested please email shaskins@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk to confirm this.

Testing appointment times:

Pupils **MUST** arrive (unaccompanied) to school at their designated testing appointment time (see table below). They do not need to wear school uniform. They should enter the building via the gate nearest the library and will be registered on arrival by their Pastoral Leader before heading to the hall to undertake the test.

Once pupils have completed their test they will be expected to leave the school site immediately and return directly home. **Pupils in Year 8-Year 11 will not remain in school after their initial test.** Please ensure you have made suitable arrangements with your child in regards to transport, pick up and/or collection.

You will be informed of the test result using the contact details provided as part of the consent process and will receive a text / email notification of a positive or negative result from the online NHS system.

N.B. Year groups named below are for September (for example if your child was in 7MB last year, they will now be in 8MB).

TESTING APPOINTMENT TIMES			
Day 1/Mon 6 th Sept	Day 2/Tues 7 th Sept	Day 3/Wed 8 th Sept	Thurs 9 th Sept
AM: NEW Year 7 PUPILS ONLY	AM: Year 8	AM: Year 10	First day back at school for Year 8- Year 11. 2 nd round of testing to take place in school
	9.00 – 8MB	9.00 – 10MB	
	9.45 – 8CW	9.45 – 10CW	
	10.30 – 8JB	10.30 – 10JB	
	11.15 – 8JH	11.15 – 10JH	
	PM: Year 9	PM: Year 11	
	13.00 – 9MB	13.00 – 11MB	
	13.45 – 9CW	13.45 – 11CW	
	14.30 – 9JB	14.30 – 11JB	
	15.15 – 9JH	15.15 – 11JH	

Key information:

- You must have provided consent for your child to be tested by returning the consent form previously provided
- Pupils must not eat or drink for 30mins prior to undertaking the test
- If you child has previously tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days we will be unable to test them
- We will **undertake testing in year groups / tutor groups** and it is vital pupils attend on time for their allocated test appointment to safely manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time. (Please speak to your child and confirm which tutor group they are in)
- Pupils do not need to be in school uniform
- **Pupils in Years 8-11 will undertake the first test and then return home straight after, they will not remain in school after their initial test.**
- Following confirmation of a negative test result pupils will return to school on Thursday 9th September
- In total pupils will undertake two tests. Subsequent tests will be conducted throughout the first week (3 to 5 days part). Thereafter pupils will then be provided with home testing kits instead
- The testing programme at BFS is for people with no symptoms. If your child develops symptoms at any time (including a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste) they must immediately self-isolate, and book a test by calling 119 or visiting <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.
- For further information please refer to this letter: [Testing consent letter](#)

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your continued support. We are very much looking forward to the start of the new academic year and seeing pupils once again.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Blake', written in a cursive style.

Tim Blake
Principal