

September 2021

Dear student,

As students return to college in September it is important that we all take steps to reduce the likelihood of covid transmission. We want to keep students and staff safe, and we want to minimise the disruption to learning that occurs when a student is required to self-isolate.

Covid Testing

In line with government guidance, the college is providing students with two opportunities to take a lateral flow test within college at the start of term, supervised and carried out by trained staff and volunteers. These tests are not mandatory, but we strongly encourage any students who opt not to take these tests in college to instead ensure that they complete a lateral flow test at home before returning to college.

For students who opt to take the two lateral flow tests in college, the first of these will take place on **Wednesday 8 September 9am to 3pm** for both new Year 12 students, and returning Year 13 students.



If you would like to attend on 8 September, please indicate a time slot using [this form](#).

Please note that it is not possible for the college to provide transport on this day, and students should leave college as soon as they have completed their test. The second test will be on **Monday 13 September** for both Year 12 and Year 13 students who opt-in, and students should attend during an independent study period, or at break or lunchtime.

Students who opt not to take the tests in college are asked to instead carry out a lateral flow test at home on Wednesday 8 September, and again on Sunday 12 September. Year 12 students will be provided with a box of lateral flow tests at enrolment. Year 13 students who have run out of lateral flow tests will probably find it easiest to collect another box of tests from your nearest pharmacy. Alternatively, Year 13 students are welcome to call into college to collect a box of tests.

If your test result is positive, you should arrange a PCR test and only return to college if the PCR result is negative, or after a required period of self-isolation in the event that the PCR result is positive. Similarly, if you have any of the main symptoms of covid (high temperature; a new, continuous cough; loss of or change in sense of taste / smell), you should not attend college and should arrange a PCR test. <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. If you have a positive result from a lateral flow test taken at home, or through a PCR test, please notify the college using COVID-19@ncpontefract.ac.uk.

How will covid arrangements be different in September?

The college continues to carefully follow all the advice provided by the government and Public Health England. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance>. From 16 August, many of the control measures previously required in schools and colleges ended. However, we encourage students to continue to take precautions.

- Continue to use hand-sanitiser around the college and wash your hands more frequently
- Continue to use lateral flow tests at home, where they are available
- Do not attend college if you test positive
- Do not attend college if you have any of the three main symptoms of coronavirus (high temperature; a new, continuous cough; loss of or change in sense of taste / smell), and carry out a PCR test

Students and staff will no longer need to wear masks or face coverings in college, but we understand that some people may choose to do so in certain situations. There will be no limits to group sizes in social spaces, social distancing in lessons will no longer be necessary, and there will no longer be fixed seating plans in classrooms. We are delighted that activities such as trips and visits and face-to-face enrichments such as clubs, societies and sports can all resume.

On college buses, MASKS ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED and you MUST wear one on the front two rows to protect the drivers. Please note that the buses will now leave at 4.10pm on most days, except Tuesdays when they will leave at 3pm.

Schools and colleges are no longer required to carry out contact tracing when a student tests positive. All contact tracing when an individual tests positive will now be carried out by NHS Test and Trace. Government guidance for schools and colleges sets out that students only need to self-isolate if they have personally tested positive or if they have covid symptoms. They DO NOT need to isolate if they are awaiting the result of a PCR test, having been advised to complete one by NHS Test and Trace. This applies to all individuals under the age of 18 years 6 months, and to those over 18 years 6 months if they are double vaccinated. We strongly encourage any students over the age of 18 who are eligible for a covid vaccination to do so at the earliest possible opportunity. <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/who-can-get-the-vaccine/>.

More information about covid arrangements, summarising what you need to know, will be sent out soon.

Your first day

We're really looking forward to welcoming you back to New College. Year 12 students start on Thursday 9 September, and Year 13 students start back on Monday 13 September. Students in **both** year groups should arrive at 8.50am on your first day. Year 12 students will collect their timetables on their first day and Year 13 students will be able to access their timetables via Cedar from 10 September at 4pm. Year 13 students should note the changes to the timing of lessons mentioned in my end of term assembly.

I look forward to welcoming you all soon.



Vicky Marks - Principal