

Dear students, parents and carers,

### COVID Arrangements at college from September 2021

As the UK has now moved to stage 4 of the roadmap out of lockdown restrictions, students, parents and carers will experience a number of changes this September with respect to COVID. New College Pontefract is implementing national guidelines, ensuring the delivery of high-quality face-to-face education for all students, whilst taking proportionate steps to keep students and staff safe.

### Potential COVID cases

If students are displaying one or more of the following symptoms they must not attend site;

- A high temperature – feeling hot to touch on the chest or back
- A new, continuous cough – 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 taste or smell – either unable to taste or smell things, or things taste or smell different to normal

If any a student displays any of these symptoms they must:

- Self-isolate at home in line with current guidance
- Inform the college that they are symptomatic
- Book a PCR test and await the results
- Inform college of the outcome of the PCR test
- If the test is negative then they can return to college
- If the test is positive they must not return to college but must continue to self-isolate in line with government guidance

If a student has a positive lateral flow test (LFT) they must not attend site and;

- Self-isolate at home in line with current guidance
- Inform the college that they have had a positive LFT by emailing Progress Tutors
- Book a confirmatory PCR test and await the results. The PCR test should be taken within 2 days of the LFT
- Inform college of the outcome of the PCR test
- If the PCR test is negative it overrides the LFT then they must return to college as long as they do not display COVID-19 symptoms
- If the test is positive they must not return to college but must continue to self-isolate in line with government guidance

### Contact Tracing

The guidance to schools and colleges regarding contact tracing has changed. Schools and colleges are no longer responsible for establishing close contacts of positive cases, this is now the responsibility of NHS Test and Trace. Where a student tests positive for COVID-19 you may be contacted by NHS Test and Trace to help

identify close contacts. In these cases, NHS Test and Trace will provide advice and guidance on further actions that individuals need to take.

Individuals will not need to self-isolate, even if they have had contact with a positive COVID-19 case where;

- They are fully vaccinated
- They are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- They have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- They are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

In these cases, NHS Test and Trace will advise these individuals to take a PCR test, you should continue to attend college while awaiting the result of this result.

Remote learning will only be provided to students who have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been directed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, assuming they are well enough to participate. This is the only situation in which remote learning will be provided.

There are a number of control measures that will remain in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19;

**Hand Hygiene** – All staff and students will be encouraged to practice good hand hygiene, with hand sanitiser widely available on site.

**Respiratory Hygiene** – All staff and students will be encouraged to follow the ‘Catch it, Bin it, Kill it’ guidance, with tissues widely available and additional bins placed around site.

**Ventilation** – All mechanical ventilation systems are set to maximise air flow through the buildings and, where available, windows will be opened. Consideration will be given to classroom temperature when opening windows.

**Cleaning** – Cleaning staff will continue to move throughout the College cleaning commonly touched areas to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

**Asymptomatic Testing** – All students have been offered two on-site lateral flow tests on their return in September. Lateral flow tests will be distributed throughout September to allow students to continue twice weekly home testing.

**Face Coverings on Transport** – Face coverings are still recommended where students may come into contact with people they wouldn’t normally meet, such as on public transport or dedicated college buses.

### Changes to Previous Controls

There is no longer a requirement for bubbles or social distancing while on site.

The use of face coverings is no longer recommended in schools and colleges due to their impact on clear communication in classrooms.

### COVID Vaccinations for Students Over 16

Students aged 16 and over and now eligible for a COVID vaccine. We strongly encourage all students to take up this opportunity, unless students have received medical advice not to from the NHS. Vaccination is the

most significant way of reducing transmission and the effects of COVID, helping to keep students and others as safe as possible.

To find out more about COVID drop-in clinics in Pontefract, please visit

<https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/6EqrCzBq2uGoGPSw-DiE?domain=wakefieldccg.nhs.uk>

### Start of Term

Please can we remind students that have not opted into having COVID tests in college to remember to complete a lateral flow test at home on **Wednesday 8 September** and again on **Sunday 12 September**.

We look forward to Year 12 students starting college at 8.50am on Thursday 8 September. Year 12 students will receive their timetables in college during the morning. We look forward to Year 13 students returning to college at 8.50am on Monday 13 September, and Year 13 timetables will be visible on Cedar from Friday.

I look forward to welcoming you all soon.



Vicky Marks - Principal