



Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust

Headteacher: Sunil Chotai, BSc

2nd March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you following my letter late last week to outline arrangements and expectations for all years as they commence returning to school.

Mass testing

Key points to remember:

1. Pupils are expected to come into school as indicated in the grid below for the LFD test, they will return home to continue with remote learning after the first test.
2. We anticipate completing all first tests by 10th March and so normal schooling (with the pandemic adjusted arrangements in place) will commence from 11th March.
3. It is important pupils attend at the indicated time – they should arrive 10 minutes before their allocated test time – no earlier or later as our arrangements are very tight and require adherence to these times please.
4. As part of the LFD process we are required to record and upload onto the governments Test and Trace site the following data:
 - a. 1st Name
 - b. 2nd Name
 - c. Date of Birth
 - d. Gender
 - e. Ethnic Group
 - f. Country the person lives in
 - g. Postcode
 - h. 1st line of address
 - i. 1st contact email address

The spreadsheets in school will be deleted after two weeks:

5. On arrival to the school pupils will be directed to the testing area, where after a short welcome and a briefing about the conduct of the test they will be asked to undergo the test. We anticipate that the whole process will take about 45 minutes - 1 hour.
6. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide any parking for parents/carers on the school site for these tests - just the volume of families involved makes this task very difficult.

The arrangements for the first, second and third Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests are outlined in the attachment to this letter. Students will return to school on 11th March and will be taken from lessons for their second and third tests.

Return to school

As I have indicated, all pupils will return to school on 11th March and all arrangements that were in place in December 2020 in terms of school staggered starts, lunch, break, zones etc. will come into operation. A reminder of school start and finish times is below. The main change from these arrangements is that related to face coverings. I have outlined below the new expectation.

	Arrival	School Ends
Year 7	08.40 for 08.50	14.45
Year 8*	08.40 for 08.50	14.45
Year 9*	08.35 for 08.45	15.00
Year 10	08.40 for 08.50	14.50
Year 11	08.15 for 08.30	15.00
Year 12/13	08.15 for 08.30	14.50

*Please note that, as indicated in the attachment, Year 8 and Year 9 students in Group 1 will need to be in school by 08.35 for their second and third LFD tests.

Face Coverings

Government guidance on face coverings has been updated and changed significantly recently. Consequently we are expecting all pupils to wear face coverings at all times in the school building, in lessons, in corridors and in communal spaces. There is no need to wear face coverings outside in the play areas or when not in the school building. Of course as before face coverings are necessary on public transport.

I would be grateful if all parents would ensure that children arrive to school fully prepared with a face covering. Where children are exempt for medical reasons they will need to bring details of this for their Achievement Coordinator to approve.

School Uniform

When students are attending school for their first LFD test we are not expecting them to come to school for this short period in school uniform. However, from 11th March when the school is fully open to all students, Years 7-11 are expected to wear the full school uniform and adhere to the school dress code in all other matters, such as wearing of make-up, hair colour, earrings, nails etc. Sixth Form students will need to adhere to our well establish dress code expectations.

Consent Forms

We are unable to test students without a completed and signed consent form. Consent forms were emailed to families on 25th February and are available on the school website: www.cdarwin.com. I would urge all parents and carers to consent so that we can minimise the spread of this virus.

We have reminded parents and carers about consent forms twice already via messages. After 3rd March, if you have not submitted your consent form we will assume that you do not wish to consent and not test your child accordingly. Late submission of consent forms will be very problematic to accommodate as our arrangements are very tight.

Remote learning programme from 8th March

We will continue to offer remote learning up to the point when all students are anticipated to return to school. However because of the disruption to individual year groups, individual students and staff work patterns caused by the testing regime, it is likely that remote learning will be impacted. Whilst we will endeavour to provide full remote learning up until all students return to school on 11th March, I hope parents understand that some staff attention will be drawn away towards the mass testing needs.

Keyworker and vulnerable children provision

A reminder that this provision will cease to operate from the end of the day on 5th March 2021. I am sorry if this causes any inconvenience; I hope parents/carers understand that our priority has to be the swift full reopening of school and the consequent need to prioritise the completion of mass testing.

Home testing

From Monday 22nd March students will be supplied with LFD test kits to test themselves twice a week at home. Test kits will be distributed after the completion of the first three school supervised tests. It is important students undertaking the tests at home are supervised by a responsible adult who can make sure that the correct procedure is followed. The home test kits are for use by students only and should not be used by other members of the household.

Results of home tests must be reported to NHS Test and Trace, either online or by telephone, as soon as the test is undertaken. The home test kit will contain all the necessary information.

Any positive test results must be shared with the school immediately, so that we can take action to trace close contacts as necessary. A student with a positive test result must isolate at home, together with members of their household, in line with public health guidance.

We will provide more detailed information in advance of the commencement of the home testing programme so that parents are able to support their children as they undertake this regular routine testing and reporting.

Public examination grades summer 2021

We are receiving more information from Ofqual and the examination boards daily and we are beginning to formulate our plans for arriving at teacher-assessed grades in each subject area. I will write to you separately to outline details of our plans and our intentions once we are in receipt of more details from the examination boards and once we have had an opportunity to consider them.

Finally

Thank you to all parents and carers for their ongoing support; I am aware that some of the arrangements outlined above are going to cause inconvenience and awkwardness for some families. I am sorry about that, I do hope that you understand the difficult circumstances that

we are operating under. I hope that we can continue to count on your full support as we endeavour to ensure that the return to school of our children is as smooth as it can be.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunil Chotai', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Sunil Chotai
Headteacher