

26th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

We hope this communication finds you and your families safe and well. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for your continued support and commitment with the remote learning programme during this time of great uncertainty.

March re-opening plans

As announced by the government earlier this week, all secondary aged students will return to schools and colleges from 8th March 2021 with the following testing measures in place:

- *all secondary school and college students will take three COVID-19 tests as they return to the classroom from the 8 March at existing school testing facilities. Schools and colleges will have discretion on how to test students over that week to enable their return to the classroom. After the initial programme of three tests in school or college, students will be provided with 2 rapid tests to use each week at home*
- *secondary school and college staff will also be provided with 2 tests to use each week at home*

This letter and associated documents are to communicate our re-opening plans and the measures in place to support a safe and productive return to the UTC.

Taking account of updated guidance, we have put together a detailed plan for our re-opening and updated our risk assessment and to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our students and staff remains paramount. The COVID-19 situation continues to cause worry for us all and we want to assure you again that staff at the UTC are doing everything they can to keep students safe and respond appropriately to government guidance as it is released.

Much of the latest guidance remains as our current plans. The major changes in the new guidance are listed below and we have updated the 'keeping yourselves and others safe' document (attached) to reflect these changes.

Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFD) and the testing regime for return to the UTC

All students will take 3 LFD tests from 8th- 16th March. Following a negative result after LFD test 1 students can return to classroom learning.

"Rapid testing using Lateral Flow Devices (LFD)s will support the return to face-to-face education by helping to identify people who are infectious but do not have any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms"

Testing supports breaking the chain of transmission of Covid-19 and supports protection of the whole community. If you haven't returned the testing consent form yet, please do so as a matter of urgency. If you need a replacement form, please contact reception@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk

To help to speed up the first test process, please can you register your child for the NHS Test and Trace system and create their account before their LFD test 1 date. This is not the same as the Covid-19 contact tracing app. A step by step 'how to' guide is attached.

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Home testing for students

Following the series on in UTC LFD tests, students will receive a home testing kit, the guidance states:
“Both pupils and staff in secondary schools will be supplied with LFD test kits to self swab and test themselves twice a week at home. Staff and pupils must report their result to NHS Test and Trace as soon as the test is completed either online or by telephone as per the instructions in the home test kit. Staff and pupils should also share their result, whether void, positive or negative, with their school to help with contact tracing. Pupils aged 18 and over should self-test and report the result, with assistance if needed. Adolescents aged 12 to 17 should self-test and report with adult supervision. The adult may conduct the test if necessary. Staff or pupils with a positive LFD test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay-at-home guidance. They will also need to arrange a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result if the test was done at home. Those with a negative LFD test result can continue to attend school and use protective measures.”

It is anticipated that students will commence home testing from w/c 22nd March 2021. We will provide further details about this when available.

Wearing of face coverings in classrooms

The guidance confirms that the wearing of face coverings in communal areas must continue and the addition of in class face coverings. The guidance states:

“We now also recommend in those schools, that face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. We are taking this additional precautionary measure for a limited time during this period of high coronavirus (COVID-19) prevalence in the community. These measures will be in place until Easter. As with all measures, we will keep it under review and update guidance at that point.”

We will update you as further guidance is released.

Phased return timetable

A copy of the phased return overview is attached. All students will be provided with their updated course timetables early next week in advance of their return w/c 8th March, the critical dates/times are:

	Year 10	Year 11
LFD test 1 <i>Students attend for the test only and return home</i>	Tuesday 8 th March 9.30am	Monday 8 th March 9.30am
First lesson back in the UTC <i>Following negative LFD result previous day</i>	Wednesday 9 th March 8.40am	Tuesday 8 th March 8.40am

There will continue to be regular updates on the website, social media and by email/letter to students and parents. Please do contact us if you have any questions or concerns. You can do this by email to reception@buckinghamshireutc.co.uk or by text to 07553 317476 or 07899 691362 or by telephone to reception on 01296 388459.

We look forward to welcoming all students back into the UTC w/c 8th March.
 Kind regards and stay safe



Sarah Valentine
Principal

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Enc: 'How to register' NHS Test and Trace
Phased return and testing timetable March 2021
Keeping yourself and others safe March 2021

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