

Beacon Hill Academy

High Arcal Drive, Sedgley, Dudley, West Midlands, DY3 1BP
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W: www.beaconhillacademy.org.uk
Principal: Sukhjot Dhami



27/08/21

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Re-Opening Plans for September 2021

I hope that you and your families have had a wonderful summer holiday and are looking forward to returning to school. I am delighted and very much looking forward to welcoming all our learners back to the academy on the w/c 6th September 2021.

Decisions regarding arrangements for the return to school have now been finalised and, in line with government guidance, Beacon Hill Academy supported by Dudley Academies Trust will continue to be diligent and put in place a range of measures which will help facilitate the safe return of all our learners. As a minimum we will continue to:

1. Expect everyone in the academy (unless exempt) to wear a face covering in indoor spaces, including classrooms. This will be reviewable on a regular basis.
2. To promote good hygiene for everyone- use of handwashing and hand sanitising
3. Maintain our cleaning regimes
4. Keep rooms well ventilated
5. Follow Public Health and Government advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

A key part of the Government's plans for a safe return to school after the summer holidays is the mass testing of all secondary learners and staff prior to their return to the classroom using 'lateral flow tests'. This is a similar approach to the one taken when schools re-opened in March. Learners will be tested twice at the academy when they return. Therefore, this will mean a 'staggered' start to school re-opening, which is outlined in the schedule below. **Please note that learners will be tested between 1-3 days before they return to school for their first day. On the day of their first test, learners should return straight home following the test. Once learners have had their first day back, they will continue to attend the academy as normal.**

Date	Detail	Mass Testing
03/09/21 (Fri)		Year 7 & 11 (1 st)
06/09/21 (Mon)	Staff training day	Year 10 & Year 8 (1 st)
07/09/21 (Tues)	Year 11 & Year 7 – First day back	Year 9 (1 st) & Year 7 (2 nd)
08/09/21 (Weds)	Year 10 & Year 8 – First day back	Year 11 (2 nd)
09/09/21 (Thurs)	Year 9 Induction – First day back	Year 10 & Year 8 (2 nd)
10/09/21 (Fri)	None	Year 9 (2 nd)

A separate Weduc message will be sent to all learners indicating the time your child is required to come to the academy as part of the mass testing. All learners will receive **two on-site lateral flow tests, 3 - 5 days apart**. Anyone with a positive lateral flow coronavirus (COVID-19) test will be told to self-isolate and seek a PCR test. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the lateral flow test, a negative result will override the initial positive result, and the individual can return to the academy.



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This is the most effective way to reduce the risk of transmission and support the continuation of face-to-face education. We recognise, however, the need to minimise any disruption to education and to continue to support your child's mental wellbeing. The government will continue to review the future need for testing in light of any changes to the public health situation. Please see attached to this letter FAQs regarding COVID testing.

Induction will be a key focus for when your child returns to the academy. We will support and settle our learners whilst highlighting any key safety measures and expectations. However, to support us with this, we ask you to help reinforce these key messages with your child. The rate of COVID-19 infections is rising in Dudley. Beacon Hill Academy, along with the Trust, will be asking all learners and staff to continue to wear face masks in classrooms as well as all other areas of our academy when we return in September. **This will be reviewed regularly during the first half term.**

We are pleased to announce that all learners will continue to study their full curriculum, unimpeded by restrictions from September. In terms of timetable, each year group will receive this on their first official day back (see the first page). This document is important, as it will outline the lessons they need to attend (period and location) as well as break and lunchtime timings. It is important that learners go straight to their form rooms on their first day back, with the exception of Year 7 who should go to the school hall through the main entrance.

Learners will not be required to stay in their 'bubbles' during the school day but will have their own zones at break and lunchtimes. Different entrances and exits for the start and end of the school day will continue to remain in place. To assist in this process, learners will continue to be supervised by Senior Members of Staff and Learning Managers. Please see below the entrance and exit your child should use:

- Years 7, 9 and 11 – Main Entrance
- Years 8 and 10 – MFL Entrance

As of September 2021, the start of the day and end of the day for all learners will be at the same time (08:40 and 14:45). Learners who arrive after the 08:40 bell will be marked as late. The academy will also return to staggered lunchtimes with all learners using the main school hall for their school or packed lunches. Details of this will be shared with your child on their first day at school.

The government have announced that GCSE exams **will** be returning this year. To support our Year 11 learners and to ensure that they catch up on any lost learning during the pandemic, our 'Upgrade' sessions will commence from the **w/c 13th September 2021** and will take place from **14:55 - 15:45 every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**. Attendance to these sessions is **compulsory**.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will continue to work with the Trust and monitor the advice and guidance we receive from Public Health England, Dudley MBC and central government, including the Department for Education. Our approach will be informed by this and we will keep you updated of any national, regional or local changes which affect the key changes.



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Can I also take this opportunity to remind you of our uniform expectations and that full uniform must be worn at all times – no exceptions. The Trust uniform policy clearly states the requirements and expectations of uniform at Beacon Hill Academy. We ask for your support in ensuring that uniform expectations are upheld. Learners in Years 11 will receive their new ties on their first day back to school and Year 7 when they collect their blazers. We ask that our Year 11 learners bring with them their current ties to be exchanged for their new Year 11 ties. Our complete expectations for uniform are available on page 19 of the Parent/Carer Guide which is available on our academy website (Website > Parents & Carers > Parent/Carer Guide).

The key information from these expectations are as follows:

- On the days which your child has PE, they should continue to attend school in their **full PE kit**. Learners will be permitted to wear their PE shorts or branded bottoms from Surr ridge Sports to school. Alternatively, learners can choose to wear their school trousers over their shorts to keep warm. If learners have the branded 'Blade Performance Top' from Surr ridge Sports, they can wear this over their polo shirt. Alternatively, their school blazer **must** be worn over the polo.
- **No other tracksuit bottoms, hoodies or other branded clothing will be allowed.**
- On non-PE days, learners are to wear formal, smart, black leather or patent shoes. Learners are not permitted to wear any type of trainers.
- School shoes should have no visible branding (whether the branding is a different colour or black) including Nike 'ticks' or sporting logos. If the learner chooses to wear black ballet pumps, these should be plain black without any accessories, such as studs. Boots are not acceptable (a boot is defined as anything that touches or comes above the ankle bone).
- Jewellery is limited to one small ring of religious significance; one small plain metal stud in each ear lobe; no facial piercings are permitted e.g. nose studs. Stretcher style piercings are not permitted in any circumstances.
 - Jewellery cannot be worn during PE lessons.
 - If jewellery is worn for medical reasons, suitable medical evidence identifying the reasons for this must be provided to the school.
- Hair accessories such as bows, flowers and wide bands are not permitted, thin 'Alice bands' may be worn. Only natural hair dyes are permitted. Hair should be no shorter than grade 1 and no design lines/patterns are allowed. Plain black headscarf (if worn).
- Learners are not permitted to wear nail varnish and acrylic/false nails must be removed for school.

We are working hard to make sure all our buildings and spaces are as safe as possible. I am sure that by working together we can continue to keep our community as safe as possible as we do return to a more 'normal' school year in September. As always, thank you for your continued support. Should you have any questions or queries, please contact helpline@beaconhillacademy.org.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S Dhami
Principal



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Lateral Flow Test Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):



How many lateral flow tests will learners have?

Year 7-11 learners will be tested twice at the academy (see the schedule above). After these two tests, parents/carers will be provided with home testing kits (by the academy) which should be used twice weekly. No further tests will be carried out at the academy.

Do I need to provide consent for my child/ren to have lateral flow tests?

Yes. Most parents/carers have already completed online consent forms (in March). For parents/carers of learners new to the academy, and those who have not previously given consent, this online consent form needs to be completed: [Consent Form](#). The parent/carer must provide consent for learners younger than 16 years old. If parents/carers want to withdraw consent, then they should contact helpline@beaconhillacademy.org.uk.

Is testing compulsory?

No, testing is not compulsory, but it is strongly advised. This is about the safety of all of our learners, their family members and staff. If learners come to school who have COVID-19 asymptotically, this can lead to other learners and staff becoming ill, impacting on everybody's safety and the education of large numbers of learners.

What is involved in a lateral flow test?

These tests involve learners taking their own swabs whilst trained staff oversee the process, and analyse the results. Results are obtained after about half an hour, so the whole process takes less than 45 minutes, including registration. You can find more information about this type of test using the following link: [Understanding lateral flow antigen testing for people without symptoms](#).

What happens if my child's lateral flow test (taken either in school or at home) is positive?

Learners with a positive lateral flow test result must self-isolate and will need to get a free PCR test, continuing to self-isolate whilst awaiting the result. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the lateral flow test and the learner can return to school, as long as they do not have COVID-19 symptoms.

What do I do if my child has COVID-19 symptoms?

Mass testing in schools is for asymptomatic cases of the virus only. If your child is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, they **must not** attend school until they have received a negative test result from the more reliable external PCR test. Your family must continue to follow NHS and government guidance on self-isolation and testing where symptoms of COVID are present. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are well known (cough, fever and loss or change of taste or smell) but more recently, we had learners testing positive after displaying a range of symptoms including headaches, stomach cramps, runny nose or diarrhoea. If in any doubt, please keep your child off school and get a more reliable external PCR test via the [NHS](#).

Does my child still need to self-isolate if someone in our household has COVID-19 symptoms or has tested positive?

No. From 16 August, anyone who is fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months [is not required to self-isolate](#).

You must report your child's test results, even if their result is negative or void.

Reporting results is easy. Go to [report a COVID-19 lateral flow test result](#) or call 119 free from a mobile or landline. Lines are open every day, 7am to 11pm. Support is available in 200 languages as well as British Sign Language. You should also keep a note of and share your child's results with their academy. Please continue to encourage your child to test twice weekly and report the results until the end of the summer term.