

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

Stakes Hill Road
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 7BW

☎ 023 9225 9214

☎ 023 9223 0317

🌐 www.oaklandscatholicschool.org

✉ oaklands@oaklandscatholicschool.org



Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
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Headteacher: Matthew Quinn B.Ed (Hons), M.A., NPQH

Our Ref: MQ/SM

15 July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Following the announcement from the Government that all children returning to school in September will have to take a lateral flow test (LFT) **on site**, schools have now been provided with more guidance on how this testing is to be conducted.

The following statement from the DfE provides the rationale for the testing regime that schools have been asked to implement.

“The Department’s focus is on the education of students and ensuring this can continue in the autumn term with minimal disruption. That is why we are following public health advice and asking schools and colleges to test all students at an on-site Asymptomatic Test Site (ATS) on return following the summer holidays. Students will have potentially been mixing with lots of people over the summer holidays and we know that testing participation rates amongst students via ATS are much higher than when testing at home, so it is essential that we encourage schools and colleges to do everything possible to prevent significant transmission in education settings at the start of the new term. We are also asking that schools and colleges encourage students to continue twice-weekly testing at home for the rest of this term and in the autumn, following the two initial on-site tests”

Organising the LFT in line with the extensive guidance for schools and ensuring some form of normality for students in school, presents a very significant logistical challenge. To help schools, the Government has permitted a phased start to the Autumn term.



The testing undertaken last March has provided us with the experience to roll this out again at the start of the Autumn term. The task ahead of us this time is to increase the number of tests to 700 a day. This necessitates the use of significant areas of the school site to test students, that alone creates problems and so, for this reason we are starting our testing earlier than the start of term. Students are to be offered two tests, between three and five days apart, and thereafter are to be tested at home twice a week for the remainder of September.

The upscaling of our testing regime relies on assembling a workforce which will include school staff and volunteers to manage the process. Notwithstanding the challenges, I believe we can chart our way through this with your cooperation and forbearance.

I want to see children back in school, learning as quickly as possible. Successful testing is the key to unlocking this.

For Years 8-13 (year group from September), we already have consent from you to carry out LFT testing, this was provided by you in March, we intend to use this again. We will send out online consent forms for our new Year 7, new Year 12 and any students that will have joined us since March 2021.

The table below indicates which students will be tested over the first few days. This form is a revision to that provided on the 2nd July reflecting the Government guidance

	Original Plan - now no longer applicable 	New plan - to accommodate LFT Testing 
Monday 30th August	Bank Holiday	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 31st August	Staff INSET	Year 7 – test then go home Year 11 - test then go home Sixth Form - test then go home
Wednesday 1st September	Year 7 Welcome and Introduction	Staff INSET No students on site
Thursday 2nd September	Year 7 and Sixth Form Induction	Year 8 - test then go home Year 9 - test then go home Year 10 - test and go home
Friday 3rd September	All students in school	Year 7 – test then stay in school for Induction Year 11 - test then go home Sixth Form - test then Sixth Form open for enquiries and students new to Oaklands to drop in
Monday 6th September	All students in school	All students in school Year 8 - test then stay in school for Induction Day Year 9 - test then stay in school for Induction Day Year 10 - test then stay in school for Induction Day Year 7 – second Induction Day Year 11 and Sixth Form - Induction day
Tuesday 7th September		Timetable starts for all

You will receive a separate letter later in the holiday indicating the time your child needs to come to school on the phased days. It is important that you keep to this. Not only does this phasing allow us to conduct the LFTs, it will also allow us to settle the youngsters after the holidays, and to explain the necessary procedures that have been put in place to help maintain both their safety and the safety of staff.

This gradual reintroduction to the school will allow us to focus on making sure all students feel safe, looked after and more confident about the whole school return.

I have been encouraged by the number of parents supportive of the measures we took earlier in the year to maintain the safety of the school community. I hope that the mass testing at the start of the Autumn term will contribute to uninterrupted education for most students.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn
Headteacher