



# Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

## Dayspring Trust



Tunstall Bank, Sunderland, SR2 0SX

Telephone: 0191 523 9745 Fax: 0191 523 9775

Email: [venerable.bede@venerablebede.co.uk](mailto:venerable.bede@venerablebede.co.uk) Website: [www.venerablebede.co.uk](http://www.venerablebede.co.uk)

Headteacher: Mr D Airey (BSc Hons)

Executive Headteacher: Mrs G A Booth (BA Hons/M.Ed.)

DAI/LCO

18<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

As you are aware, the government have instructed schools to offer TWO tests to pupils upon their return to school in September: "As pupils will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school pupils should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term...Pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed." (DFE)

The first test will be offered on either Monday 6 September OR Tuesday 7 September. All pupils will return to school on Wednesday 8 September in a staggered system with the new Year 7 returning earlier in the day – a separate letter will be sent to you outlining the process for the return to school. The second test will then be given on Thursday 9 September OR Friday 10 September whilst pupils are in school. The government recommend that all secondary pupils receive a test before returning. However, if you decide that you do not want your child to take the test, they are still expected to return to school when school reopens on Wednesday 8 September. All pupils are expected to return to full-time education in the autumn term.

This letter will explain the process and how you can book your child in for a test if you wish to do so. For those of you who have children who were tested last academic year, the process will be very similar. However, this year we have invested in an online booking system so that you will be **able to book a slot in advance using "SchoolCloud"** that is convenient to you. Note – you will only need to book for the FIRST TEST as the second one will be conducted during school time.

The actual **testing of our pupils will be supervised by agency staff who have been specifically trained** to carry out this role. Our staff will be there to support the pupils and the process but will not be doing the testing. To generate the sample to be tested a swab of mucus from the throat and nose is taken. **Ideally our pupils will be able to "swab" themselves**, or if they would prefer, this can be done for them by the testing team. The sample from the pupil will then be tested to determine whether they are positive for coronavirus. We have implemented a Covid safe environment throughout our testing facility, in line with Government and PHE guidelines, to ensure that everyone is safe.

Once completed, the **tests take between 20 and 30 minutes to give the result**. Results will then be forwarded by the testing team to NHS Test and Trace. The role of Test and Trace is to contact families and inform them of the test result – whether the result is negative or positive. This is done by a text and / or an email, depending on what details you have provided school. **This could take up to a couple of hours in our experience.**



### **Step 1: Complete the consent form which has been sent to you.**

Before you can book an appointment you **MUST** complete the consent form which has been sent to you. If you have not received this consent form today, please let us know using the 'contact us' page on the school website.

### **Step 2: Book an appointment for your child**

Once you have returned your consent form, you will be able to book an appointment for either Monday 6 September or Tuesday 7 September via SchoolCloud. Remember your child must attend at the allotted time. Unfortunately, we cannot admit pupils if they are late. A link to this booking will be sent to you by 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### **Step 3: You child attends their first appointment**

Please arrive promptly at your allotted appointment time and not too early. Five to ten minutes before the appointment is advised. Pupils should make their way to the **main school entrance** where they will be greeted by a member of staff, and queued outside, socially distanced from one another. A reminder that pupils will be expected to **wear a facemask** once they reach the main entrance to school. (When pupils return to lessons, we will be sending out separate instructions about facemasks and the rules we are adopting around Covid. For the testing process, however, we expect pupils to wear a face mask in school until they have had the result of their first lateral flow test.) It is essential that pupils **do not arrive in "groups"** as they will not be able to be tested together. Each pupil has an **individual pupil appointment time**. Once tested, pupils will be expected to **leave the school site**.

Once pupils enter the school site, they will follow the instructions of staff who are there to usher them to the testing provision, and then out of school. Pupils will not be permitted spend time in school and we would appreciate your help in explaining why this is so important to them. **There is a one-way system in place which our pupils must follow at all times**. If escorting your child to school, remember that **no parents / carers are allowed into the school itself as we need to reduce footfall to meet Covid safe limits**. If in a car, please use one of the parking bays and wait in your car. If on foot, please wait at a sensible distance from the main entrance and maintain social distancing from other parents / carers.

### **Step 4: All pupils return to school on Wednesday 8 September – more information to follow**

All pupils **MUST** return to school on Wednesday 8 September **regardless of whether they have had the first test or not**. Those who have been tested will receive their 2<sup>nd</sup> test later in the week during school hours. All pupils will be expected to continue to test themselves twice weekly until the government instruct us differently. If you have run out of tests, pupils can collect new boxes upon their return to school.

Due to natural immunity, pupils do not have to take part in his round of testing if they have tested positive for COVID at any time since 8<sup>th</sup> June. **Remember, if your child begins to display the symptoms of a coronavirus infection, they should not attend school to be tested**. You should organise a PCR test at an NHS testing facility. The tests which schools are completing are for asymptomatic situations where pupils are not presenting symptoms of infection.

I would like to acknowledge the support which parents / carers have given this year during what has been a very difficult time. We appreciate your understanding and patience. A separate letter will follow with further information on how all pupils will return to school on Wednesday 8 September.

Yours faithfully

*David Airey*

Headteacher

