

Thursday, 15 July 2021



# THE CORBET SCHOOL

Headteacher Dr Jane Tinker BSc MA(Ed) EdD NPQH

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families well during this exceptionally strange and challenging end to the term. We have had, at time of writing, two positive lateral flow tests in the Year 10 bubble and approximately 80 Year 10 pupils and a number of Year 9 pupils, who were in contact on the school bus, are now at home self-isolating as detailed in the letters they have received. I hope that the summer holidays bring some welcome respite and rest for us all. The self-isolation guidance does change during the summer along with a number of other Covid related issues relating to schools. I will list a brief summary below of the changes from 19<sup>th</sup> July, for us they will take effect when we return in September. I do advise you of these with caution, as they could change as we all know:

- Anyone who is ill with Covid symptoms should not attend school and should have a PCR test.
- Bubbles are no longer needed and so all staff will be back in their classrooms.
- There will be no split break or lunchtimes (Break 11.10 – 11.30am, Lunch 1.30 – 2.15pm) and the dining room will be open for pupils to eat their lunch.
- Contact tracing will move to NHS Test and Trace from the 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.
- From 16<sup>th</sup> August anyone under 18 years of age will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact and instead will be advised to have a PCR test.
- Face coverings do not need to be worn; they may be introduced temporarily in response to an outbreak. This is also the case on school transport although if pupils want to wear face coverings that is acceptable.
- Ventilation: spaces to be as ventilated as possible whilst being kept at a comfortable temperature.
- 2 on-site lateral flow device tests 3 to 5 days apart on return to school in the Autumn Term.
- Remote education to stay in place for self-isolating pupils if well enough to access lessons remotely.

Recently, we have been provided with the following guidance from the Department for Education regarding the start of the school year in September:

*'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.'*

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*'All education workforce should also continue to test – twice-weekly at home - on return in the autumn term. We will review the continued need for testing, based on public health advice at the end of September.'*

*'The measures we will have after summer, including testing, strike the right balance as we learn to live with the virus so children can continue in education in the best possible way.'*

*'All secondary school pupils should receive 2 on-site lateral flow device tests, 3-5 days apart, on their return in the autumn term.'*

*Settings may commence testing from 3 working days before the start of term and can stagger return of pupils across the first week to manage this.'*

As a result of this guidance for September, and in an attempt to complete the testing programme as quickly as possible, I would like to share with you our outline plans at this stage:

**Thursday 2nd September:** All year groups to be transported to school by parents/carers, tested on-site and then to return home after their test. A letter on the 12<sup>th</sup> August will set out times and further detail. All our school staff will be involved in testing in a variety of locations around the school site to enable this to happen as quickly and efficiently as possible.

**Friday 3rd September: Year 7** to attend for their first day of term on normal school transport (we have planned a settling in day in response to the pupils missing the normal taster day). We will send out further detail on the 12<sup>th</sup> August to Year 7 parents and staff will be on site on the 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> September to answer any questions.

**Monday 6th September: Year 7** to attend school on normal school transport (they will also be tested for their second time during the school day). All other year groups to be transported to school by parents/carers, tested on-site for the second time and then to return home after their test.

**Tuesday 7th September: All year groups to attend school on normal transport for the full start of term.**

We have planned this in order that we have the least disruption to learning and lessons once the term starts and thank everyone in advance for their support with this.

Further detail around the plan above will be sent out on the 12<sup>th</sup> August when we have confirmation from the Department for Education that they still want us to carry out the testing programme described. Should the Department for Education guidance change over the summer term, we will communicate alternative plans ready for the start of term. Please do check the school website and social media platforms for updates too.

In order to give parents/carers as much information as possible, if we are **not required to carry out testing** then, Year 7 will attend on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September for a settling in day

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with **all year groups** back on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Again, we will confirm this in writing with all the detail you may need on the 12<sup>th</sup> August.

I am sorry that things cannot be clearer for you before the summer break but as we all know managing Covid is a fluid situation and we have all had to learn to go with the flow of it.

I wish you and your families a restful and happy summer and look forward to seeing you all in September.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Tinker." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Jane Tinker  
Headteacher