



Da Vinci Academy
A L.E.A.D. Academy



"One Team, Changing Worlds"

Return to School and Testing Frequently Asked Questions March 2021

Question: Are all students back at Da Vinci Academy from Monday 8th March?

Answer: Students should return to Da Vinci Academy as per the timetable sent out previously. A copy is on the website. Return is phased from 8-10th March to allow initial covid-19 testing across all year groups.

Question: Does my child have to return to school?

Answer: Attendance is mandatory for all pupils. DfE guidance states that school attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from 8th March. The usual rules on attendance will apply, including parents' legal duty to secure their child's attendance at school. The ability to issue sanctions such as fines will also be reinstated, and schools will be responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the LA.

Question: Will school catering be available?

Answer: School kitchens are expected to be fully open and providing food for pupils including those eligible for FSM. This includes breakfast club.

Question: What is happening about testing pupils upon their return to school?

Answer: Returning secondary pupils will be tested 3 times on site at school. They will then be provided with home kits for twice weekly testing thereafter. During the week of 8th March, pupils will only be expected to return following their first negative test result.

Question: How will my child know when to attend school for their first Covid-19 test?

Answer: A text will be sent out informing you of when your child should attend school with their tutor group. This will be between 8-10th March according to a tight schedule to ensure all students are tested as early as possible so the school can fully reopen to all pupils.

Question: Is it the case that all pupils must receive their first test before being allowed back into the classroom?

Answer: Pupils and students who consent to testing should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. Although testing is voluntary, government guidance recommends that pupils are strongly encouraged to participate as testing regularly will help to identify positive cases more quickly and break the chains of transmission. Schools should not prevent pupils who choose not to undergo testing from returning to school – pupils not undergoing testing should attend school in line with the full year group return as per the timetable sent out from Da Vinci Academy.

Question: If pupils are not tested, is it the case that they should not return?

Answer: No. Schools should not prevent pupils not undergoing testing from returning – pupils and students not undergoing testing should attend school/college in line with their school's phased return arrangements. Testing is voluntary but pupils are strongly encouraged to participate as testing regularly will help to identify positive cases more quickly and break the chains of transmission.

Question: Do all pupils have to have three tests in the first week?

Answer: No. The DfE guidance is for tests to be done 3 to 5 calendar days apart. Testing should begin when pupils and students return but it can be phased to manage the numbers passing through the test site at any one time. Schools and colleges have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis, depending on their circumstances and local arrangements, but you should prioritise children of critical workers, vulnerable pupils and students, and year groups 10 – 11. **The reference to three tests relates to the number of tests pupils should have before they receive their first home test kit, not the number of tests pupils should have in their first week.** In other words, they should have had three tests that are supervised on the school site, before they start home-testing.

Question: It will be very difficult to do two tests 3-5 days apart. Can we test once a week over a three-week period?

Answer: The DfE guidance is for tests to be done 3 to 5 days apart. Testing should begin when pupils return but it can be phased to manage the numbers passing through the test site at any one time. Schools and colleges have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis, depending on their circumstances and local arrangements, but they should prioritise children of critical workers, vulnerable pupils and students, and year groups 10 – 11.

Question: We have heard that we don't have to count weekends, i.e. we could test all year 11s on Monday the 8th and then do them again on Monday 15th?

Answer: No this is not correct. Pupils should be tested 3 to 5 calendar days apart.

Question: How do we do tests 3-5 days apart AND get all students in as quickly as possible?

Answer: There are different models for implementing testing that for large institutions may involve staggering the return of year groups across the first week. So, some pupils may only get their first test in week one and their second test in week two. Testing should begin when pupils and students return but it can be phased to manage the numbers passing through the test site at any one time. Schools and colleges have the flexibility to consider how best to deliver testing on a phased basis, depending on their circumstances and local arrangements, but they should prioritise children of critical workers, vulnerable pupils and students, and year groups 10 – 11.

Question: Who will test the 11-year-olds? Are staff required to do this, or must parents come in to swab their own children?

Answer: In an Asymptomatic Testing Site (onsite testing) all secondary aged pupils who are 11 years or above can swab themselves if they are able to. **When testing at home**, pupils aged 12-17 should self-test and report with adult supervision (the adult may conduct the test if necessary) and pupils aged 11 should be tested/swabbed by an adult.

Question: What about pupils who are unable to do supervised swabbing – those pupils who may need to be assisted by an adult?

Answer: We recognise that self-swabbing may cause significant concerns for some pupils and students, for example those with SEND. Testing is voluntary and no child or young person will be tested unless informed consent has been given by the appropriate person. Additional capacity for assisted swabbing is available in exceptional circumstances.

Question: How will I receive my son/daughter's Covid-19 test result?

Answer: A text message and email will be sent to your primary contact details registered with school from the NHS track and trace site.