



**HERMITAGE
ACADEMY**

Hermitage Academy

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Tuesday 13th July 2021

ARRANGEMENTS FOR STARTING HERMITAGE ACADEMY AND ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING OF STUDENTS IN SEPTEMBER 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope this letter finds you and your family well. We are acutely aware that it has been a very difficult time for all Year 6's as they prepare to make a very significant change from primary school to secondary school, without any chance to even visit. Despite the difficulties, we are very much looking forward to welcoming our new Year 7 students.

You will be aware from recent announcements, that all schools need to undertake asymptomatic testing for coronavirus of students on their return to school in September. We are also aware that this might cause some anxieties for our youngest students who have not been through this before. Considering this, we are planning that **Thursday 2nd September** will be a 'transition' day for our new Year 7 students, similar to the day that would have normally taken place in the summer term. It will be a day to help students to feel confident and comfortable in their new school and with new people.

We will test Year 7 students during the morning. Following their test, they will take part in a range of activities (hopefully outdoors) until everyone has been tested. This will help to prevent any spread of the virus before results are known. Students will meet their new teachers and begin to make new friends. During the rest of the day, they will meet their form class and form teacher, be taken on a tour of the school, experience some 'taster' lessons and become more familiar with school routines.

For Thursday only, we ask that your child arrives wearing their new PE kit and brings a warm top and sports trousers with them, in case the weather is cold. This way, they do not need to use changing rooms, which would be another new activity and complication for them, all in one day!

Students will undertake two Covid-19 Lateral Flow Tests taken 3 – 5 days apart. After this, the government is transferring responsibility to parents for testing their children twice per week at home throughout September. We will issue testing kits to students early in the week of 6th September.

It might be helpful for your child, if you were able to practise the testing process with them before September, if you are able to collect a test kit from a chemist. This might help to reduce any anxiety children may have.

We must ask all parents to complete a consent form for the test. If you do not consent, we will not test your child. Please could all parents complete the form using the link on the school website (it is on the home page or you can go directly to the Year 6 transition link: [Year 6 transition \(hermitageacademy.co.uk\)](http://hermitageacademy.co.uk)

We would be grateful if this was completed **no later than Friday 6th August 2021**.

Please could your child arrive at the school gates on Thursday 2nd September at the times below. We will meet them on arrival and take them to the sports hall on site, where testing will take place. We have arranged arrival times by the alphabetical order of their surnames. We are staggering the testing this way, to minimise waiting times.

Alphabetical Goup by SURNAME	Time
A to C	8.30 am
D to G	9.00 am
H to L	9.30 am
M to R	10.00 am
S to W	10.30 am

If your child is showing any symptoms of coronavirus, please do not send them to school.

If your child is not able to attend due to absence on Thursday 1st September, please contact the school office and alternative arrangements for testing will be made.

The start time for Year 7 students will return to normal on **Friday 3rd September**. We expect all students on site for the 8:30am bell. On the Friday, students should arrive in full school uniform, with their equipment, and on arrival they will be welcomed by their form tutor. We will ensure they know where to go on the Thursday in readiness for the Friday morning.

There are some practicalities that we would ask you to consider and discuss with your child:

- Please do not allow your child to bring into school food of any kind that contains nuts. We have several students that are highly allergic to these.
- If your child would like to buy food/lunch at school, please ensure they have enough money on the school system to pay for this (payments via Parent Pay).

Many staff are involved in testing. During this period, please do forgive us if we cannot respond to queries as quickly as we normally would.

In closing, we do hope that the autumn term will be less disruptive than we have experienced over the last two years. We will do all we can to ensure your children are happy and settle in well to their new school.

With every good wish,

Dr J Gorlach
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Mr D Stewart
Head of School