

Dear Parents/Carers

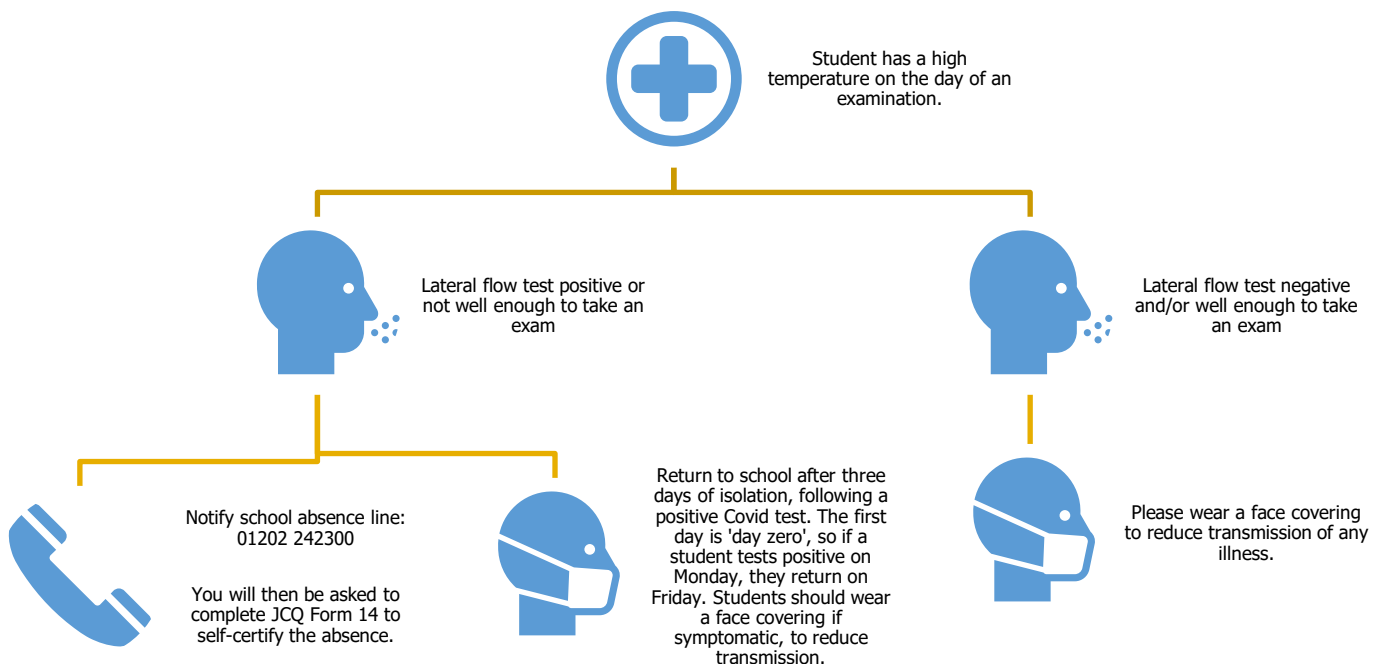
RE: Procedures for students who have Covid-19 during GCSE exams

The summer examination season begins on Monday 16 April 2022. This year, the government have created a longer exam 'window' with at least ten days between examinations in any individual subject. This is to minimise any potential disruption caused by Covid-19. In addition, the government have made the following changes to exams to support students this summer:

1. Advance information of the focus of examinations
2. Provision of support materials for some examinations
3. Changes to Non-Exam Assessed (coursework) units and requirements
4. Optional content in some GCSE and vocational qualifications
5. Generous grading in comparison to 2019.

If any student becomes unwell with Covid-19 during the examination period, then the school will follow a process that has been set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

The table below outlines what a student should do if they have a high temperature on the morning of an exam, or if they become unwell during a day on which an examination is being held. If students have some common symptoms of Covid (e.g. a runny nose) but are well enough to attend an exam, then they can do so. If a student is living in a house with someone who has a positive Covid test, then they can attend exams as normal. Students are not required to take regular lateral flow tests and the Academy is no longer able to supply test kits.

**Oak Academy**

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If a student is too unwell to take an exam, then the school has to follow a process of applying for 'special consideration' from the relevant exam board (AQA, Edexcel, Eduqas, NCFE and OCR). The school does not require a positive lateral flow test result to submit an application for special consideration. The special consideration process involves the completion of two documents:

1. **Parent or carer completes Form 14:** Self-certification form https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Form-14_Self-Certification-Form.pdf
2. **School completes Form 10:** Application for special consideration: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Form-10_Application-for-special-consideration.pdf

Once this application has been completed, the exam board will consider the circumstances of the absence and award a grade that they deem to be appropriate. **The school has no control over how the grade is awarded and the school's view of how a student has performed through the course is not taken into account.** The exam board will calculate a grade using the student's performance in the other exam(s) in that subject and, where applicable, also include NEA (coursework) performance in the calculation. Please note that 25% of the GCSE qualification must also have been completed. Therefore, a student cannot be awarded a grade if they have not completed at least some of the assessments (exams or NEA units).

The full guidance documents which inform the process outlined above can be accessed using the following links:

1. JCQ Guidance: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/A-guide-to-the-special-consideration-process-202122-%E2%80%93-General-and-Vocational-qualifications-Updated-8-April-2022.pdf>
2. UKHSA Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-sets-out-how-to-live-safely-with-covid-19>.

The special consideration process is also used if students are disadvantaged on the day of an exam by a circumstance beyond their control (e.g. recent bereavement). An exam board will apply an increase of up to 5% to an exam score, depending on the level of disadvantage experienced by an individual student. If you feel that your child may qualify for special consideration, then please make the exams officer aware of this on the day of the exam in question. The school will then work with you to make an application. The contact details of our exams officer are included below.

If there are any questions about the information above, please contact Kerry Lingane (exams officer) or me and we will respond to your query.

1. Kerry Lingane: Kerry.lingane@oak-academy.co.uk
2. Hayley Richley: Hayley.richley@oak-academy.co.uk

We wish all students the very best of luck in the weeks ahead. They have been working hard and deserve every success in the exams. With that in mind, we encourage students and families to be mindful of the ways in which they can protect themselves from Covid infection. These include: social distancing, wearing face coverings whilst indoors in public places, minimising contact with large groups of people and maintaining regular hand-washing routines. We also recommend, if they know someone with Covid-19 then they avoid any direct contact with that person.

Many thanks as always for your support.

Yours Sincerely



Hayley Richley
Interim Principal

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