

Friday 19th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and the whole family well. We have had a great return to school over the last 2 weeks and it is so good to see all of the students and staff back in school once again. Everyone has been working hard on their return to face-to-face lessons and taking care of one another and being kind and safe moving around school. Students have really been taking the risk assessment seriously and it says a lot about how they all look out for one another in this community. Attendance has been great – well done and keep this up! What is the impact of poor attendance?

- Less engagement in school
- Fewer opportunities for rewards
- Reduced access to learning
- Decreased chance of future success
- Impact on GCSE grades.

The dance studio has been our Covid Testing Centre and the team of staff have done an unbelievable job of carrying out 3,600 tests in the last 2 weeks. The students have been calm, patient, and supportive in going through this process and I feel really proud of all of them.

We have 2 students who have tested positive. One in Y7 meaning that 21 Y7's are at home now self-isolating for 10 days. One in Y8 meaning that 51 students in Y8 and 1 in Y11 are at home self-isolating.

The process in school for positive case/symptoms

We would like to explain the process that school goes through when notified of a positive case (or symptoms from a student or member of staff) and advise how you can continue to support school so that they can stay open for learning.

The process school follows is laid out in national guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) which is endorsed by Public Health England (PHE). **Each case (and hence the steps we have to take) are slightly different each time.**

School may be notified in a variety of ways of a positive case/individual displaying symptoms amongst our community. This could be at any time, weekends, evenings and during the school day. The LFT tests are also identifying those staff and students who show no symptoms.

Once we have received notification of a positive case we act immediately as follows:

- We establish if the affected person has been in contact with anybody in school whilst infectious.
 - If the answer is no, then there is no impact in school and the affected person stays at home to self-isolate for 10 days. They will receive written confirmation that they must self-isolate, the reason why and contact details for further support and guidance.
 - If the answer is yes, then we establish all close contacts of the affected person. We do this by identifying where that person has been in school and who they were with during the period they



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were infectious to others. We may use timetables, seating plans and lunch or friendship groups to determine these contacts.

- The number of contacts can vary each time depending on the situation.
- All of these close contacts will be advised that they must self-isolate at home for 10 days. They will be sent home if they are in school. Parents and carers of students identified as close contacts are contacted firstly by phone. Staff and students identified as close contacts will receive written confirmation advising that they must self-isolate, the reason why and how long for. We also provide contacts for support and further guidance.
- We contact the LA and the Trust as soon as we have been notified of a case or symptoms affecting a member of staff or student **if there are large numbers that have to be sent home**. We share with them the information we have and they then may refer us to PHE depending on the size and nature of the outbreak. DfE and/or PHE offer advice and approve or advise actions to be taken. In every case we contact the Local Authority and the Trust Covid Operations Team.

Once those that are affected either as close contacts, confirmed case or with symptoms have been spoken and written to, we then communicate with our wider community, parents, carers and staff, in writing. We confirm what has happened and the actions that have been taken as well as information on how to prevent the spread of the virus and contacts for further support and guidance.

Please can you support us in keeping school open by notifying school immediately if you, your child or anyone you share a home with:

- have symptoms of Covid 19. These are:
 - new continuous cough and/or
 - high temperature and/or
 - a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Please note, if this is the case they should get a test. If you are unsure if the symptoms displayed may be Covid related please consult the NHS 111 service.

- are taking a test for Covid 19
- have been tested and received a positive result
- had close contact with a confirmed Covid 19 case
- have been contacted by track and trace to advise self-isolation following close contact with a confirmed case

*Please note, anybody with Covid symptoms or who has tested positive must isolate for **10 days**. The 10 days is from when symptoms first started or the date a positive sample was submitted (whichever was first). Anybody who has had close contact with a positive case (household member, advised via Test and Trace or following a school bubble closure) must isolate for **10 days**. They should not get a test (unless advised to do so by a medical professional or if they start to display Covid 19 symptoms). If they obtain a negative test during the 10-day period they must still complete the 10-day self-isolation. **It is very important that anybody who is isolating does not leave the house.***

This will assist us in taking any **immediate necessary action** to support and protect you and our community and to keep our schools open for learning. If you cannot get through on the school number then please get in touch by emailing us on the email address on this letter. We know these are challenging times for all. We are delighted that our students are learning in school again and appreciate all that you do to making this possible. Please let us know if you need support with any of the information in this letter.

With very best wishes to you and your families.



Tina Smith
Headteacher



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