



Executive Headteacher: Mrs L. A. Gwinnett

Ref: 3171

15 July 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Covid 19 - Update

The in-school lateral flow test programme, follow up PCR tests and community testing has identified positive cases of Covid-19 in some of our year group bubbles. We think that it is important that we keep parents informed and rather than send several separate emails, this summary gives all of the information we hold at the moment. Since the end of last week, we have had four positive cases (either confirmed or awaiting a PCR result) reported to school. Some cases have required contact tracing whilst others have not because the families are already self-isolating. In summary:

- 2 positive cases in Year 7
- 2 positive cases in Year 9

We have carried out a full risk assessment and identified all those who have been in close contact with the affected cases and have recommended that they stay at home and self-isolate until 10 days after their last contact. This is what is necessary and what we are required to do in line with the current government guidelines. Further to the students who were collected today, we will be in touch with you tomorrow with specific details of the dates for the isolation period and other information you may need.

If you have not been contacted by school directly nor received written notification, you have **NOT** been identified as a close contact and therefore your child/children do not need to make any change to their usual routine, including attendance at school.

We can confirm that each case has again been 'isolated', meaning that transmission has happened as a result of cases within a family or within the community – *there is no in bubble transmission*.

As you will be aware, 'close contact' leads to 10 days' isolation at home and this can occur suddenly and sometimes within the school day following contact tracing (from BPA) or from another 'track and trace' notification. Our staff are not excluded from this and we do have an increased rate of staff absence. So far, we have largely managed to cover absence internally and although it has been difficult, as ever, the staff have been first class. At the moment, we are managing staff absence which includes those who are ill, who are self-isolating and some staff who have had their own young children sent home unwell or as school bubbles have closed. Like many schools, we



have avoided using external staff who are not already known to us for the primary reason of availability and for other associated health and safety reasons.

As a reminder, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia). However, it is clear that the Delta variant presents other common signs and symptoms as well; headache, sore throat and runny nose are some and there are possibly gastric symptoms. If your child, or anyone in your household, develops these symptoms, your whole household must remain at home and not go to work, school or public areas. You should arrange testing for the person who has developed symptoms. When the result is known, further advice will be available. Testing can be arranged by calling 119 or via the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

At any point, let alone right now, the last thing that we want to do is to direct a period of isolation for a student or member of staff. We are simply following the guidelines that we have been asked to do in the interest of public health. Throughout the last year we have worked together as a community and resolutely so to minimise the effects of the virus and it looks like we need one final push as we approach the end of term. Thank you once again for your ongoing support and patience– we really appreciate it.

Yours faithfully,

L MacLaren

Mrs MacLaren
Head of School