

26 November 2020

To: all Parents/Carers

Dear Parents/Carers

As a result of our recent cases of COVID I just wanted to try to provide some further information to support you to understand the circumstances regarding the cases and how we are dealing with the matter.

The last two cases that have been reported to you of students in Years 11 and 7 have come to light due to random testing programmes run by the Office for National Statistics and Imperial College, London. The families have been involved in these tests to try to ensure our communities are safe. The students have had no symptoms and came into school unaware of any potential risk. They immediately informed the school when the results were confirmed and are behaving in a totally responsible and moral manner.

I understand the anxiety in the community and hope that people would email the school to ask for more information rather than posting queries and challenging parents/carers and students via social media. We will try to give as much information as possible whilst respecting the privacy of families. Please could I ask for people to be empathetic and understand the complexities of each situation before making judgements which could turn out to be incorrect?

The school has a very clear message that if you have symptoms within your household or the students have symptoms they should stay at home and we give that message very clearly in the mornings as students enter the building. We would also like to emphasise that if you are getting your child tested outside of a trial testing programme then your child must isolate until the results are returned.

The second matter that I would like to emphasise is the need for students who are isolating to remain indoors, isolating from their family as much as possible and not going out into the community at all during this time. This is very clear in the government guidance.

In terms of how the school is dealing with incidents of this nature, we speak to Public Health England (PHE) every time regarding our measures and strategy and discuss this at length. I have had an hour's discussion this morning to establish how we can manage this and we are following the advice given. I have been told that it is not necessary to isolate the year group entirely. We are very conscious of the need to provide the best possible education. Isolating the whole year group would only prove beneficial if they were totally isolated and did not go out at all or come into contact with anyone who may have the virus.

With regards to cleaning, the school has a very regular cleaning and sanitising programme as part of our risk assessment. We will ensure a deep clean of every area of the school is completed but PHE states that the best time for this is directly after contact and so although any cleaning is beneficial it is not going to have the impact if we are unaware of the carrier.

We would appreciate you speaking to your child about the need to keep socially distanced at breaks and lunchtime as well as on the journey to and from school. Students are still congregating in the community and we are finding this very difficult to discourage. We do not therefore have the information required to thoroughly track and trace all contacts.

Finally, I would like to thank all parents/carers for their supportive comments and understanding. Disruption to the education of your children is the last thing that the school would want. We are trying during what is an incredibly challenging term to do everything possible to take account of these circumstances and build protection to support students. We are reviewing the mocks this evening for Year 11 and considering the best way forward. It is essential that we conduct them as valid exams, so that they are completed at the same time to ensure that no student is disadvantaged. We will be doing everything possible to prepare students and ensure we have robust assessments should the exams be reduced, or centre assessed grades requested prior to exams taking place or in the event of them being cancelled. At present the Government is determined to run the exams so we want to make sure students are actively working towards them. I will be asking Mr Yassin to contact you in the next few days to inform you of the decisions taken.

I wish you and your family a safe and healthy few weeks as we head into the Christmas period. I promise that we are doing everything within our powers to protect this school and your children and continue their education wherever possible.

Yours faithfully



Ms C Dallas
Headteacher