

Wednesday, 08 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I said in my letter of last Friday, the start of the school year has gone well and it was really pleasing to see that we have had 95% attendance.

There are three matters I would like to clarify.

1) Face coverings on transport

Firstly, it is expected that face coverings are worn on school buses and public transport and all students are asked to wear a face covering. We will ask students to put their face covering on before they get on the bus and will check the buses before they leave at the end of the day.

However it is then down to the personal responsibility of students to keep their face coverings on. Please emphasise the importance of this with your sons and daughters.

2) Students and staff with Covid symptoms

Yesterday I received the following information from Public Health England:

*Crucial to our overall support for schools and colleges is ensuring that everyone with coronavirus symptoms has access to a test as soon as they develop those symptoms. It is vital that we learn from the recent Scottish experience, where the return of schools saw a huge increase in demand for tests from people without coronavirus symptoms. We want to avoid a similar surge in test demand as England's schools and colleges return to ensure that we continue to prioritise our testing capacity for those **with symptoms** and to avoid children, students and their families self-isolating unnecessarily.*

To ensure we identify those with coronavirus while avoiding a huge increase in demand for tests from people without coronavirus symptoms, we ask that you recommend to your pupils, students and staff who feel unwell, that they get tested if:

1) they develop one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms: a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; or the loss or change of their sense of taste or smell; or

2) they are recommended to get tested by a healthcare provider (e.g. GP or nurse).

If a pupil, student or staff member develops one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms described above, only they should be tested. There is no need for their households to have a test, unless they are also symptomatic.

Unless a pupil, student or staff member has one of the three main coronavirus symptoms, they should only be tested if instructed otherwise by the local authority, health protection team or their GP. As schools and colleges across England return, pupils and students may feel unwell for example with a sore throat, stomach upset or a headache. These pupils and students don't need to book a test but may need to stay off school or

college and seek medical advice through their GP or pharmacist as usual.

To confirm our arrangements:

If any student or member of staff displays any of the Coronavirus symptoms then they should not come into school and arrange for a test. Likewise if someone displays symptoms in school they (and any siblings) will be sent home and anyone displaying symptoms should arrange for a test.

The member of staff/student with symptoms should isolate for 10 days starting from the first day of their symptoms and the rest of their household for 14 days.

If the student/member of staff is NOT a known contact of a confirmed case they can return to school if a test result is negative, provided they feel well and they have not had a fever for 48 hours. We would ask for a copy of the negative test result before the return to school.

If the child is a contact of a confirmed case they must stay off school for the 14 day isolation period, even if they test negative. This is because they can develop the infection at any point up to day 14 (the incubation period for COVID-19), so if a child tests negative on day 3 they may still go on to develop the infection.

If a student/staff member tests positive for COVID-19 then the school will be contacted by a contact tracer (either the local Health Protection Team or the Local Authority) and appropriate decisions taken about which individuals or groups need to isolate.

If I am informed of a positive test and have not already been contacted by a contact tracer then I will notify both the local Contact Tracing Team and the Local Authority Health Protection Team and appropriate decisions will be taken.

3) Parents/carers on site

I would ask that you do not come on to the school site by car to drop your children off but drop them in the vicinity of school. We have a lot of students moving around the site in a morning and there is very little space. We are also currently trying to minimise the number of adults in school so would ask that you make any contact with school either by email or phone in the first instance and do not come into reception.

We have had to make many adjustments and get used to new ways of being in school but everything is being done to allow everyone to learn in as safe an environment as possible. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Waller
Headteacher