



31 January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

As many of you are aware, there has been an increase in Covid-19 infections within our school community. We have spoken with DfE and the Local Authority and they have praised our procedures and control measures, and not asked us to do anything differently. However, Covid-19 is continuing to affect our students and now our staff. We currently have 11 staff absent and 104 students. We are not the only school in this situation, and consequently it is becoming very difficult for us to secure supply staff to cover lessons effectively.

We are doing everything we can to make sure the school is not affected by these high absences and that high quality teaching and learning continues. Staff, who are not able to come into school because of Covid, are delivering lessons via Teams if they are well enough to do so. Staff in school have repeatedly given up their non-contact or preparation and planning time to cover lessons, and some staff have come in on their days off to help.

As school leaders, we need to plan for worst case scenarios, so we are considering what we might have to do if the rate of infection continues to rise. With 11 teachers off, that is approximately 330 students without their normal teacher each lesson, and 60 lessons to be covered each day. Student safeguarding is an absolute priority, and we need to take this into account, as well as ensuring we provide an excellent education.

With that in mind, we are letting you know that it is a real possibility that if case numbers among staff continue to rise, we may have to close the school temporarily for some year groups and ask these students to access lessons via Teams or Satchel One from home. We wanted to let you know in advance what our plan would be, as if we did have to do this, we would only be able to give you one day's notice.

If we did have to temporarily close the school, Years 8 & 9 would be asked to have lessons via Teams where possible (from staff who are well) or on Satchel One for absent staff. Students in Years 7, 10 and 11 would remain coming into school.

I would like to stress that we are, and will continue to do everything we can to avoid this scenario: It is only if infection rates in school rise and thus staff absence rises further that we will have to put this plan in to action.

In order to help reduce infections in school, and to ensure we can remain open for all students, all students must:

- Continue to test twice weekly and log results
- Wear masks around school: it does help to reduce the spread of Covid-19

We are asking that parents be extra vigilant about any potential symptoms that your child has at this time. If they have any symptoms – a cough, temperature or a change in sense of taste or smell, they should be kept off school, and a PCR test booked to confirm they are negative before returning to school. We will continue to take a similarly cautious approach to any student exhibiting symptoms in school and ask them to take PCR test.

Thank you for your support.

Kind regards

Mr Albon
Headteacher

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