



20th November. 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you and your family are managing to keep well during these challenging times.

I am writing to update you on some additional precautionary actions that are being undertaken, following an individual testing positive for COVID-19. Our actions follow the receipt of updated guidance from Public Health England and Sandwell Council on 18th November.

We have been advised by Public Health England that there were 2 confirmed cases yesterday of COVID-19 in Year 10 within the school.

In light of increasing COVID transmission rates, Public Health England has reviewed guidance from the Department for Education, alongside latest medical evidence. Where previously it was the case when there was a positive case, we were able to identify close proximity contacts, to reduce the number of children needing to self-isolate, the guidance has now been updated and advises that **if there is a single case in a class, all class members must self-isolate.**

Following an individual testing positive, the whole class bubble is self-isolating as a precautionary measure to help limit any transmission of the virus, and will be accessing learning remotely from home. In the meantime, **the school is safe to remain open to all students and teachers who are not in the identified class bubbles.**

We wanted to make you aware of this new guidance, as we understand and appreciate that this may cause some further disruption. It is essential that we follow the advice of the expert health protection teams, in order to safeguard our students and staff, as well as the wider school community. We have closely followed the guidance of the Government, Public Health England and Sandwell Council throughout the pandemic, and are constantly reviewing and adapting our safety measures and processes to ensure they are in line with the latest advice and of the highest standard.

We are continuing to work closely with our local health protection team to ensure that we are taking all the necessary precautions.

I have attached below guidance on what to do if your child starts to develop symptoms, as well as advice on the symptoms to look out for. Please do contact the academy immediately if your child develops symptoms.

I want to take this opportunity to reassure you that, as always, the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff is our number one priority and we will continue to adhere to all Government and local guidance to safeguard our school community. We are hugely grateful for your ongoing support, understanding and cooperation at this time.

These are difficult and demanding times. I wish you the very best and would ask, if you are struggling, to please do let us know as it may be that we can source further support.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Adrian Price
Principal

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home for at least **10 days** from the date when their symptoms appeared and should arrange to have a **test** for COVID-19.

If your child has symptoms, all other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

If you are able to, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Even if the test is negative, your child must not return to school until the initial fourteen day self-isolation period is over.

Symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

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

Do

- 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

Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>