



# SUMMERHILL SCHOOL

31 October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

## **COVID UPDATE – OCTOBER 2020**

As the national and local situation deteriorates, it is clear we are entering a perilous time with regard to the high number of transmissions. As you will now be aware, the country has been placed into a 4-week lockdown which will begin on 5 November 2020. Schools will remain open during this time but adherence to our guidelines is now more important than ever.

During half term, we have received a number of emails from families and students who have tested positive and it is clear that we must all step up in a serious and determined way in our risk mitigation against Coronavirus. As a school, we cannot do this in isolation and social interactions students are having away from school life are clearly having a detrimental impact on the rates of infection.

## **TRANSMISSION INFORMATION**

A summary document has been produced with regard to the transmission of Covid-19 and how it moves from person to person. Our version (thanks to Mr Cresswell) is attached to this letter. You will see that we are doing all we can to mitigate against this and everyone has a part to play.

## **FACE COVERINGS**

We took the decision before the start of the autumn term that face coverings must be worn by all adults (staff and visitors) and students when entering the school site, moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. **We are now widening this and recommending all students wear face coverings in lessons as much as possible. In addition, students will now be required to wear them in social spaces and break and lunchtime unless they are eating. This is where social distancing is particularly difficult.** Any students who fail to cooperate with this or deliberately break our Covid rules, will receive negative behaviour points and sanctions via Classcharts. Whilst I know some parents question this decision, reading the attached document will clearly show how face coverings limit the transmission and therefore, it is something which will benefit our whole community. Taking no action is clearly not an option at present.

## **VENTILATION**

We will continue to have as many doors and windows open in school to aid the airflow. The heating is on and the building is generally warm in most areas. If students are particularly prone to feeling the cold, we would suggest an additional vest/sleeveless top under their shirt.

## **NON-COMPLIANCE**

We have been made aware and given the names of several students who have not followed the self-isolation rules after close contact with a positive case. **THIS IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE** and is putting other people at risk. We will have no hesitation in passing the details of these families on to the Police so that they can be cautioned under the national track and trace programme. This selfish and ill-advised action is dangerous and against the law.

## **CONTACT TRACING**

The school has always adhered strictly to the national and local guidance on contact tracing. This means that anyone who has been in 'close contact – less than 2m for more than 15 minutes' will need to self-isolate if a positive case is reported. Our seating plans are now consistently updated and checked regularly and there is a clear list of questions that any family MUST answer with regard to friendship groups and socialising.

## **SYMPTOMATIC OR ASYMPTOMATIC**

Many of the recent cases are asymptomatic where tests have been carried out as a precautionary measure based on other family members testing positive. Therefore, we cannot rely purely on symptoms developing as a sign of Covid-19. **If any**

**member of your family household is concerned they are asymptomatic, or have been in contact with someone who may be, PLEASE DO NOT send your child into school until a test has been carried out and the results are known.**

#### **RETURN DATES FOR SELF-ISOLATING STUDENTS**

- Year 11 students who have been off school since Monday 19th October should return to school as usual on Monday 2nd November
- Year 9 students who have been off school since Wednesday 21st October should return to school from Tuesday 3rd November
- Year 9 students who were contacted on Monday 26th or Tuesday 27th October (during half term) should return on Monday 9th November

**If your child has been in contact over half-term with any person who may have symptoms or has tested positive for the virus, please DO NOT SEND THEM TO SCHOOL.** Contact us and we will liaise with the Public Health Team but in most cases, they will need to self-isolate for 14 days.

**If in any doubt at all, please do not send your child into school until you have made contact with us.**

Remote learning will be set for all isolating students via the Satchel One App.

#### **TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Under the current guidance, there should be no car sharing to and from school as this constitutes a mixing of households. In addition, students should not be mixing in groups on the way to and from school and must maintain social distancing at all times. There should be NO physical contact between students from different households.

Please remember that the key signs of Covid-19 present themselves as :

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste

**Can I politely ask that any positive cases are reported directly to the school FIRST as soon as they are known (via [info@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:info@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk)) before they are shared more widely on social media or within friendship groups. It is unhelpful when we receive second hand information from parents or other students and have until that time been unaware of the situation. This is in everyone's best interests so that we can contact trace potential connections as soon as possible.**


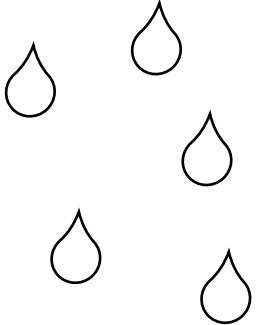


To keep our community safe, our school open and provide the best education to our students, it is a non-negotiable that we all do our part, control our actions and behaviour and support each other. This is NOT a time to ignore or defy regulations and rules as this just makes the situation worse for everyone concerned.

I rely on your support for us to keep going through the current time.

Yours sincerely

**Martyn Palfreyman**  
**Headteacher**

## Transmission routes for COVID-19 and how to reduce them (V1 31 October 2020)

Transmission route	How it works	Some of the ways we reduce this transmission route
<p><b>Direct contact</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An infected person touches another person (kissing, hugging, holding hands, contact sport).</li> <li>• This is the easiest way to pass on the virus, but also the easiest to prevent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No physical contact in PE, Drama, Dance lessons</li> <li>• No hugging, holding hands, etc in social times</li> </ul>
<p><b>Droplet</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small droplets of saliva are expelled during normal breathing and speaking.</li> <li>• Larger numbers of these droplets are expelled during singing, coughing, sneezing, physical exercise, etc</li> <li>• These droplets are relatively large (sometimes even visible) so drop to the floor fairly quickly and do not travel large distances (typically less than 2.0m)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students seated as far apart as possible, facing in same direction</li> <li>• Minimise movement around rooms</li> <li>• No singing / shouting / chanting / wind instruments</li> <li>• Students at least 2.0m apart during physical activity</li> <li>• Maintain distancing at social times</li> <li>• Catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue, dispose in a foot-operated bin</li> <li>• Everyone wears a face mask in communal spaces.</li> <li>• Use of face masks encouraged in lessons</li> <li>• Specified entrances to minimise time on corridors on way to first lesson</li> <li>• Staggered ends to the school day</li> <li>• Maintain 2.0m spacing around staff</li> <li>• In the event of a positive test, staff / students who have been within 2.0m for more than 15 minutes will isolate for 14 days.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aerosol</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiny droplets of saliva are expelled during normal breathing and speaking.</li> <li>• Huge numbers of these droplets are expelled during singing, coughing, sneezing, physical exercise, etc</li> <li>• These droplets are so small that it takes them a long time to drop to the floor and they can travel long distances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ventilation! Ventilation! Ventilation! Windows and doors open as much as possible</li> <li>• No singing / shouting / chanting / wind instruments</li> <li>• Everyone wears a face mask in communal spaces.</li> <li>• Use of face masks encouraged in lessons</li> <li>• Students encouraged to spend social times outside. Picnic benches provided.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Materials &amp; Surfaces</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infected person touches surfaces/materials, or droplets of their saliva land on the surface/material.</li> <li>• Someone else touches the surface/ material.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of hand sanitiser on entry to school and start of each lesson</li> <li>• Avoid touching face / mouth</li> <li>• Thorough spraying / wiping of tables / surfaces between classes</li> <li>• No sharing of materials / books / equipment between bubbles</li> <li>• 72-hour quarantine between collecting work and marking</li> <li>• No loaning of stationery</li> <li>• Designated year group spaces for break/ lunchtime</li> <li>• Designated toilets for each year group.</li> <li>• Increased cleaning of door handles, communal surfaces and toilets</li> </ul>