



10 September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

## **Coronavirus Testing Update – September 2020**

Following the return of our students and the subsequent rise in Coronavirus cases across the country I felt it was worth outlining the plan of what happens if a student is suspected of having symptoms and may require a test.

**I would like to confirm that at present, regardless of the misinformation and different rumours which will notoriously circulate during these times, that we have no known cases of Covid19. We will always act with integrity and honesty with regard to any known issues and notify parents and students as soon as possible, under the guidance from Public Health England. The national situation is far too serious for us to be hiding information from our school community. Therefore, please only respond to the legitimate and official information we provide as a school.**

## **What symptoms should schools be looking out for? How can schools tell if a pupil has just a cold, or whether it might be coronavirus?**

The recommendation from the Department for Education for staff and students who feel unwell, that they get tested if:

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

## **A student has coronavirus symptoms – what happens next?**

If a child (or staff member) develops one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms described above, they should be tested as soon as possible and stay off school until they have a result. We are aware that, as highlighted in the media, there is currently a delay in some testing. Tests can be booked online (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>) or over the telephone through 119.

If a child is being tested, it is crucial that you notify us about this as soon as possible, either by phone call to reception (you will be asked to confirm your identity through some detailed security questions) or via email to [info@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk](mailto:info@summerhill.dudley.sch.uk). Again, any emails will be verified for authenticity via a phone call home.

As in any year, as schools go back, children may pick up common colds or feel unwell with a sore throat, stomach upset or a headache. These children may need to stay off school and parents/carers should call their GP or dial 111 to seek medical advice if they are concerned about their child's health.

## **A positive case has been confirmed. What happens next – who has to go home and isolate?**

If a positive case is confirmed within our school, swift action will be taken to ask those who have been in close contact with them to self-isolate. Public Health England's local health protections teams and local authorities will support and advise us directly if this is the case. The health protection team will work with us in this situation to guide us through the actions we would need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, we must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

### **In the case of a local community outbreak, what should schools do?**

If a local area sees a spike in infection rates from localised community spread, appropriate authorities will decide which measures to implement to help contain the spread. The Department for Education will be involved in decisions at a local and national level affecting a geographical area, and will support appropriate authorities and individual settings to follow the health advice.

In the event of a local community outbreak, all possible measures should be taken before any restrictions are imposed on schools to maintain consistent education for children and young people. The updated government guidance sets out **four tiers of restrictions for education settings**, for use as an absolute last resort in areas subject to local restrictions. All current areas of local restrictions are at Tier 1 – fully open to all students full time, with face coverings required in corridors and communal areas for students in Year 7 and above. If all other measures have been exhausted, Tier 2 would advise secondary schools and colleges in a restricted area to use rotas (of probably two weeks) to help break chains of transmission of coronavirus, while primary schools remain open to all students. Tiers 3 and 4 introduce remote learning full time for wider groups of students, with vulnerable children and children of critical workers continuing to attend.

### **Remote Education**

In the event of any partial or full closure, we would begin remote education via our Satchel One (Show My Homework) system. Teachers would upload daily work onto the system for the relevant lessons. We are currently revising our 'Blended Learning' plan, in line with government expectations and will issue updated information in due course. It is important to understand that any partial closure would mean staff are still in school 'live' teaching and therefore may not respond to queries immediately.

### **Social Distancing Reminder**

I need to reiterate the importance of social distancing once again and if you can support us with conversations at home, it would be very much appreciated. I am aware that we can do everything to manage this on site but we have little control over what is happening in the local area and further afield in Kingswinford. We must work together to ensure everyone is aware of the importance of this. Please also be reminded that students should not be on the school site before 8.35am. We have, over the last few days, had students dropped off at school as early as 8.05am. As a school, we are not in a position to manage them at this time.

In addition, we have received emails and calls from members of the public who are concerned about parking and social distancing of parents collecting their children. This has been the case in Cheltenham Drive. In the interests of local amenity, can I please ask you to follow the necessary social distancing rules and also be conscious of parking, which may impact the local residents.

This is an ever changing, fast moving situation and therefore, guidance can be subject to change at any time. We will always provide up to date information as soon as it is available.

I would like to continually reassure you that safety is our number one priority and we will do all we can to ensure that risk mitigation continues to be in place for all our staff and students. It is important we work together to do all we can to protect our school community and their families.

Yours sincerely

**Martyn Palfreyman**  
**Headteacher**