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School

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Headteacher: Mr Paul Haigh
Chair of Governors: Mrs Karen Milbourn

Date: 16 September 2020

Our ref: PHA/fh

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Latest Covid – 19 Update

I am taking the time to message you to ensure you feel as well informed as possible at these times.

Students with positive tests

As you know there have been a small number of students who have tested positive and contact tracing has resulted in some other students being asked to self-isolate as a precaution to ensure the infection cannot spread in school. So far, Public Health advice has not been to close entire bubbles as the number of cases are low and they are unconnected. That advice could change if numbers increase, particularly in the same year group bubble.

Families are also doing the right thing and keeping children at home who have Covid symptoms (new and continuous cough, fever or change in sense of smell or taste) or when members of the household have symptoms.

Supporting learning for those at home

Teachers are having to work exceptionally hard at the moment. Their teaching style is hampered by the need to socially distance from their classes. The bubble system means they are teaching in five different rooms a day moving across the school and don't have access to their own specialist rooms. On top of this, they are working their hardest to ensure work is set for students who are at home, but please do understand they are no-longer available all day for virtual teaching. That said many are attempting to combine both face to face with remote support - but it isn't easy.

Should an entire bubble be closed we will convert to a dedicated remote teaching strategy.

The upcoming training day (when no students are in school) on 2 October will include training for staff around contingency planning, to ensure learning can continue should there be more disruption to school this autumn and winter.

We are awaiting details of how next summer's exams will operate and then we will be in an even



better place to prepare Y11 and Y13 for the exams, using the additional budget from the DfE to help students where our assessments show they are not making the progress we would have expected, due to the disruption they have experienced.

Rule of six

Please ensure all your family members do not mix in groups bigger than six when outside of school. This will help keep cases down and the school open. Students must go straight home and not congregate in local parks or at shops. This is causing members of the community anxiety. Whilst the fact students are mixing in much bigger groups in school might not appear to make sense, it is the restrictions outside school that are aiming to enable schools to stay open, so we all need to do our bit for the good of young people.

Getting a Covid test

I realise getting tests is difficult, but for those who have symptoms they are vital to enable students to come back to school. People who are self-isolating due to contact tracing do not need a test unless they have symptoms. If the person in your house who has symptoms returns a negative test then you are in the clear. Putting excess pressure on a testing system that cannot cope is causing schools like ours staff shortages, which could start to impact on our ability to stay open to all year groups if it gets worse

Open Evenings and Parents' Nights

Sheffield Headteachers have been asked by Public Health to make all such evening events virtual this year. Open evenings will be held online and teachers will contact parents to discuss your children's progress in other ways. We will not be holding face to face events this term.

More routine issues:

School uniform

Uniform is very good for the vast majority of students but some reminders are needed as some bad habits have crept in:

- Hair, if dyed, should be in a natural colour.
- The only jewellery permitted is one pair of ear studs, a small discreet nose stud and a watch. Other jewellery will be confiscated.
- No leggings.
- Shoes must be all black and appropriate for school (see website)
- Mobile phones must not be seen in school- this includes sticking out of back pockets of trousers. If seen they will be confiscated.

Students arriving in school without proper uniform will be loaned replacements including black plimsolls from the school office.



Litter

It's nice to see so many students enjoying the late summer weather to eat packed lunches outside – this is also the safest way to prevent spreading of the Covid virus. Sadly too many students are being thoughtless and leaving litter. Please ensure your child doesn't do this if they bring a packed lunch to school.

Parents collecting students from school at the end of the day

I am sad to see my repeated requests to ask parents to park a 5 minute walk from school have largely been ignored. This is making it dangerous for pedestrians and the increased number of staff and students doing the right thing and cycling to school. Furthermore, some parents are leaving engines running despite being parked next to the new signs that forbid it. Please set a good example to your children by following my reasonable requests made for everyone's safety.

I would like to offer my personal thanks for your continued support in such unprecedented times and for the many positive messages we have received.

Yours faithfully



Paul Haigh
Headteacher

