



Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to outline the procedures we have in place when we have a positive case of Covid-19 in school. These procedures follow guidance from Public Health England and local Public Health officials. They are standard for all schools across the country.

- As soon as a positive case is reported we undertake a thorough track and trace process in school whereby we identify 'close contacts'. A close contact is defined as anyone who has spent more than 15 minutes within 2 metres of the case or more than 1 minute within a metre
- A positive case is considered to have an infectious period starting 48 hours before they first got symptoms or 48 hours before the test was taken, whichever was the earlier
- We check close contacts by scrutinising seating plans and class layouts for each lesson and registration time and cross-reference this by checking with teaching staff and with the person concerned as to who they may have been close to
- We carefully check potential close contacts before school, at break and at lunchtime and after school
- We also check attendance details to see which pupils were in school on the days when the individual may have been infectious
- Once close contacts have been identified we notify parents/carers by email that their child must self-isolate. We also inform them of the duration of the isolation and when they can return to school. Those needing to isolate will automatically have this absence authorised.
- We also inform all other parents **in that year group** that we have had a positive case but that their child does not need to isolate. **We cannot authorise absences for any pupils in the year group who are not on our list of those identified as close contacts.**

The name of the person who has tested positive is strictly confidential. The school will never confirm or deny any names of pupils.

Understandably, when a positive test happens this can be unsettling for pupils and parents. We also have to move fast and if the pupils are at school at the time we will send them home immediately. **We are not always able to personally phone all parents/carers in these circumstances** so it is very important that all parents/carers check their emails/texts regularly and read the letters that we send out in detail as they do contain all the information that we are able to give. Please do make sure that we have up to date and accurate contact details for you or you may miss vital information. If pupils have to isolate at home they may need access to books/equipment left at school. We can arrange for these to be bagged up and collected but this must be done by appointment - **parents/carers must not come into school without a pre-arranged appointment.**

"This is an OUTSTANDING school" - Ofsted 2016



A reminder that the symptoms of Covid-19 are:

- a new and continuous cough
- a high temperature
- loss of sense of taste or smell

If anyone in your household develops any of these symptoms then **the whole household must isolate** and the individual should request a test using the NHS portal: [Check if you or your child has coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#). **Pupils must not return to school until a negative test has been received or the period of isolation is over** and they no longer have symptoms. It is very important that all families follow this guidance. For most children symptoms are likely to be very mild and it can be tempting to think that they should go to school. However, **even pupils with mild symptoms or who have recovered may still be infectious** so they must stay at home for the whole isolation period and get tested. We do ask for evidence of a negative test; a screen shot of the text/email message is sufficient.

I have been asked by our local Police Community Support Officer to remind you that pupils should go straight home at the end of the day and should avoid going into shops, especially in groups, during this period of lockdown. The police are monitoring the local area and have reported that some of our pupils are delaying their journey home and meeting in groups in the Town Centre. This is a breach of the current restrictions.

I am sure that you will appreciate that managing all this at school can be challenging and places an additional burden on our staff. We always prioritise safety of pupils but at the same time do not want to disrupt the education of those who are not close contacts by sending them home unnecessarily.

As ever, thank you for your support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Wood
Headteacher