

16<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I wanted to give you an update on the COVID-19 situation in school.

Unlike many high-profile cases locally and nationally, we have not yet had to send a whole class or year group home. While some of this is undoubtedly down to good fortune, it also shows that our safety systems are working. Where we have had positive cases in our community, we have been able to quickly identify close and proximity contacts and take the necessary action, always in conjunction with Public Health England.

We must continue to be vigilant with hygiene protocols and observing social distancing. I would like to thank you for your support in ensuring that students are wearing a face covering in communal areas. I should also remind you that, in the current national lockdown, students should be walking to and from school with a maximum of one person from a different household.

As already stated, we are doing everything we can to keep school functioning as normal, but we are being faced with extraordinary challenges due to extreme staff absence levels. We currently have eleven staff off who are perfectly healthy themselves, but are absent because of either contact-tracing or someone in their household has symptoms or is positive. A further seven staff are absent for a non COVID-related reason. This is putting extreme pressure on us as a school, and we have been forced to temporarily amend the timetables of some of our older students to ease some of that pressure. If the situation persists, we may be forced to ask some groups of students to stay at home and access remote learning. We would only take this step as a last resort.

Finally, I know what an anxious time this is for families. I want to assure you that your child's safety remains of the highest importance to me, and I say that not only as a headteacher, but also as a parent myself.

Thank you for your continued support in these unprecedented times.

Yours faithfully



Jonathan Mellor  
Headteacher