

17 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am pleased to let you know that although our Year 7 student still has some symptoms, they are getting better and generally well. I would also like to thank the family who alerted us immediately and followed the government guidance precisely in order to protect our community.

If a member of a household shows symptoms the guidance states that the whole household must isolate and the person with symptoms should be tested. I appreciate there are capacity issues with testing, but our family was persistent in order to do the right thing for us all. Although the test results took time to be sent through from the testing centre, we were made aware as soon as the result became known and were therefore able to act swiftly to protect our community.

As a result of the processes we have put in place, we have been able to identify precisely those students who have been within 2 metres of the student for more than 15 minutes and therefore who need to self-isolate in line with the government guidance. Our student became symptomatic on Saturday 12th September, so the 14 day period will conclude at the end of the day next Friday 27 September.

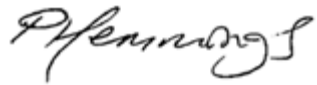
We have identified 20 students in Year 7 to whom this applies. The 20 parents will be contacted this afternoon to advise them and to check that the students have been able to access their remote learning today in preparation for tomorrow and next week. We have been advised by Public Health England that all other Year 7 students should return to school tomorrow.

When I spoke with Public Health England this afternoon they fully supported every action we have taken and stated that we have taken appropriate action in the best interests of all of our children and that they would have advised us to do precisely what we have done today. Attached to this letter is their further guidance for you.

At Oakmoor School, we have been extremely rigorous with our infection control measures since March and since September we have also employed additional day time cleaners. Our site is continually cleaned throughout the day and a complete whole site clean is undertaken at the end of each day. We have hand sanitiser stations around the school site and in every classroom and every student desk and chair is disinfected after use and before another student uses them. I am sure your children will confirm that their teachers have been enforcing this. If teachers change classrooms, they disinfect their work area before another teacher uses the space. I have also insisted on mask wearing in corridors and in our Dining Hall, which are not required by the government guidance, but I feel is the right thing to protect our community as far as possible. Our one way system and forward facing classroom desks where possible also reduce the amount of face to face contact between students and therefore reduce transmission of the infection.

A high quality education is critical to a young person's success and life chances, so it is essential that we work together to ensure children are in school as much as possible. Thank you for your ongoing support as we work hard to ensure continuity of education whilst keeping our community as safe as possible.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Hemmings'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping tail.

Mr P. Hemmings
Headteacher

Guidance from Public Health England for Parents & Carers

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school and should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

All other household members who remain well, must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. This includes anyone in your 'Support Bubble'.

Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.

If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community

If you are able, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

Do

wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
wash your hands as soon as you get home
cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands)
when you cough or sneeze
put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Further Information Further information is available at
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Advice for Child to Self-Isolate for 14 Days

If your child is well at the end of the 14 days period of self-isolation, then they can return to usual activities.

Other members of your household can continue normal activities provided your child does not develop symptoms within the 14 day self-isolation period.

Please see the link to: Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>