



KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL LICHFIELD

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1 April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we approach the end of our second term of this academic year, we wanted to take this opportunity to thank our students for the way in which they have approached their return to school. Our young people amaze us every day, from persevering with a topic they find challenging, wearing a face covering in lesson or partaking in lateral flow testing. We certainly didn't think a year ago that some of these things would be part of our school routines but it has shown us just how adaptable, resourceful and resilient they are. Our students have come back with a positive mind set and, if the sounds of laughter and students playing on the field in the sunshine is one of the indicators, they are certainly enjoying being back. Our school once again has the buzz of learning and excitement from our students as they spend free time with their friends; something that is difficult to replicate on Microsoft Teams.

We would also like to thank our staff. Our catering team has worked tirelessly, despite continuing staffing shortages, to ensure that staff and students have a lovely meal at lunch time. Our ICT and Site team have spent hours supporting classroom renovations and preparing our new classrooms for occupancy, which are happily now in use. Our Science Technicians, Student Support and Learning Support Teams, Teaching Staff, Reception Team, Administration Team, Data Team (to name just a few) worked together to offer 4,500 lateral flow tests as students returned to school and to give students the confidence to move to home testing. This was all in addition to their 'day' jobs. Our team of cleaners continue to work exceptionally hard to follow our comprehensive cleaning routines in school, helping to keep us all as safe as possible.

It has been a real privilege to visit classrooms this week and to see the enthusiasm and passion for learning from our students and staff. It is difficult to believe that it is now over a year since the initial lockdown and it is fair to say that it has certainly been a learning curve for us all. Our teachers are simultaneously juggling teaching students in the classroom whilst supporting those working from home due to isolation. We have had many lovely messages from parents and carers thanking our teaching staff for their care, guidance and support, which are very much appreciated.

On 8 March we took steps towards normality by beginning to welcome students back to school. Together, we've already achieved so much. Our planning for next term and beyond will be ongoing as we adapt and respond to updated guidance. For now, it is important that our students, families and staff take some time for a very well deserved break. We should remind ourselves that in these 'unprecedented' and anxious times that talking, supporting and looking out for each other really is the most important thing we can do.

Routines on return to school.

It is encouraged that lateral flow testing continues twice a week throughout the holiday. It is particularly important that the test completed on the Sunday night or Monday morning before returning to school is completed for those students who are taking part in lateral flow testing. Testing is helping to identify asymptomatic cases and to stop the spread of the virus. Although overall cases are falling nationally, a higher proportion of the cases identified are in school age children. Whilst this can partly be attributed to the increased accessibility to tests, it also acts a reminder that we must continue with the efforts and measures that we have put in place so far to keep as many of our children in school as possible. This half term we have also seen examples where a student who was identified as a contact, went on to test positive for COVID-19. Whilst we want all students to be in school, contact tracing remains an important part of stopping the spread of the virus.

The DfE guidance for students to wear masks in classrooms will continue to be reviewed as part of the overall roadmap out of lockdown. The guidance is currently that they should be worn by students and staff (unless

exempt) who are unable to maintain social distancing. We will continue to update you as further information is provided from the DfE.

Arrangements for reporting positive COVID-19 test results in the holidays.

- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), **having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school**, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms **more than 48 hours since being in school**, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

It is therefore critical that if your child **tests positive** after developing symptoms **within 48 hours of being in school**, that you inform school by **sending a text via the attendance text line: 07860 034183**. This number sends a message to our Group Call which will be monitored by members of the Senior Leadership Team, who will then contact Public Health England for specific guidance about which children would need to self-isolate and contact them in accordance with their instructions. We will use Group Call to communicate this. These children must then self-isolate at home for 10 days from the last contact with the positive case as instructed by Public Health England. Other household members do not need to self-isolate at home unless the child self-isolating develops any symptoms of Covid-19. A PCR test will need to be arranged for the child with the positive test result. If a subsequent negative result is obtained, please ensure that this is also communicated to school, so that we can communicate to any contacts that they no longer need to self-isolate.

Please note that where pupils are required to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case after the first 48 hours following the end of term, school does not need to be informed about their absence unless it impacts on their attendance at the beginning of term.

This Department of Education guidance is clear that schools remain responsible for supporting Track and Trace for the first 6 days of the school holidays. While there will only be implications for contact within school if someone develops symptoms within the first 48 hours. Please ensure that any positive test results are reported promptly.

We thank you for your ongoing support and wish you a wonderful Easter break.

Yours sincerely



Mrs L Hurn
Deputy Headteacher

Also included with this letter

- Letter from Staffordshire County Council (as an attachment)
- Flow chart of what to do if your child has symptoms of COVID-19 (please note that the guidance for all lateral flow tests that are positive, whether taken at home, in a school or a test centre, should now be followed up by a PCR test (as an attachment)
- Please click this link for a letter to students from the Secretary of State [A letter to young people from Gavin Williamson MP, Secretary of State for Education - Education in the media \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)