

Sent: 21 October 2020 15:51

Subject: Half-term update from Mrs Purnell, Headteacher

Covid-19 Update:

Since the year 7 cases towards the start of term which resulted in approximately 30% of the current year 7 being isolated, we have had 5 further cases in school this half-term. Details are as follows:

- 3 cases in year 11, plus a sibling of one of the year 11 students who is in year 9. All 4 confirmed cases were also connected to the same external dance school. 90 year 11 students were sent home to self-isolate as they were deemed to have been close contacts. Due to the timescales involved, we did not need to send anyone home in relation to the confirmed case in year 9.
- 1 case in year 10 which resulted in 48 students (17% of the year group) self-isolating as close contacts.

When we are informed of a student who has tested positive for coronavirus, we act swiftly to carry out our own test and trace procedures. This involves identifying all students who have been in close contact with the confirmed case within the 48 hours prior to the development of their symptoms. We use seating plans on our ClassCharts system and have individual conversations with all teachers who taught the student in the time frame to confirm close contacts, and we liaise directly with the family of the child to ascertain close social interactions. Close contacts are defined as follows:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, **within 1 metre**
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (**within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes**) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

Once we have identified the students and have arranged for them to leave the site quickly and safely, we determine each student's return date to school dependent on the timing of the last close contact with the confirmed case, and we write to parents to confirm the date of return and our provision for the continuity of education. We do appreciate that there already has been considerable disruption to students' learning since March, and we do our best to ensure that education continues remotely.

For reference, please see the attached blended learning document which outlines what you can expect in the event of a whole class/year group bubble closure and in the event of partial class absence due to self-isolation.

Local COVID Alert Levels – clarification

Last Monday afternoon the Prime Minister gave a Commons statement on coronavirus in which he confirmed that **schools will remain open at all levels.**

As you will be aware, there are three local COVID alert levels: medium, high and very high. Whilst Ilkley is in an area of "high" alert, please note that this does not mean that we

have to implement the higher tier restrictions in the contain framework. The alert framework is separate from the contain framework and any further restrictions to education in local areas of “high” or “very high” alert will only be made in exceptional circumstances based on the incidence and transmission of the virus.

As communicated at the start of term, the [contain Framework](#) has set out four different tiers of restrictions for education settings, for use as an absolute last resort in areas subject to local restrictions. There are four stages of response, depending on the level of virus cases in the area. It would appear that Ilkley is currently in tier 1 of the contain framework, whilst being in the “high” alert category:

Tier 1: All students attend as normal. Face coverings are mandatory in corridors and busy communal areas.

Tier 2: Secondary schools and colleges move to rotas, with students alternating a fortnight attending and a fortnight at home. Primary schools remain open to all.

Tier 3: Most secondary students learn from home as secondary schools and colleges are only open to vulnerable children, the children of key workers and selected year groups.

Tier 4: All schools switch to remote learning, except for vulnerable children and the children of key workers, and students at alternative provision and special schools.

NB: There are currently no published criteria to indicate what would lead to a school being asked to move into tier 2 or higher of the contain framework

Reminders:

- Any child who is displaying any symptom of coronavirus (a new continuous cough, a temperature of 37.8°C or higher or loss of taste and/or smell) must not be sent into school and a test should be arranged asap. The household must in its entirety isolate during this time. Only if the test is negative and nobody else in the household is displaying symptoms, should the student be sent back into school and the rest of the household can end their isolation. We have been made aware of a couple of cases where students have been returned to school prior to receiving their test result and this puts the whole school community at increased risk.
- If a member of the household tests positive for coronavirus, the confirmed case must isolate for 10 days from the onset of symptoms and until the individual's temperature falls within the normal range. The rest of the household must isolate for 14 days from the onset of the confirmed case's symptoms or from the positive test result if the person is asymptomatic.
- Please reinforce the need to respect social distancing and the rule of 6 when students leave the school site. We have reminded all students of their responsibilities in the community and the consideration and respect they need to demonstrate to others, particularly on busy pavements where it is courteous to walk in single file if others are walking in the opposite direction. Whilst most of our students are fantastic ambassadors for the school, we have had a small number of complaints about students being inconsiderate and not maintaining 2 metres social distancing which has understandably caused anxiety, particularly to elderly and more vulnerable members of the community.

- As Leeds and Bradford are in areas of “high” alert, there should be no mixing indoors with friends or family who are not members of your household or your support bubble. This restriction is not limited to private homes, but also includes restaurants, cafes, leisure and entertainment venues. Whilst schools are exempt, students should be aware that they are affected by these restrictions outside of school.
- Please ensure that students do have at least one spare mask in their bags/blazers at all times unless they are exempt. This is to both mitigate against students forgetting one, and also to allow a mask to be replaced easily if it breaks or becomes damp. Whilst we do have a small contingency supply, these should only be used in an absolute emergency and our stocks are already depleted.