

Ref: PLE



Thursday 16th September 2021

COVID-19 UPDATE

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please see updated guidance from Public Health below in relation to COVID-19. We ask that everyone continues to remain vigilant; **you must not attend the Academy if showing any symptoms of COVID-19, and book a PCR test immediately.**

We will distribute further home testing kits to students for whom we have consent, in accordance with guidance. If you did not initially provide consent for COVID-19 testing, but you require home testing kits, these are available from local pharmacies.

Announcement from Public Health Sandwell

National guidance states that once any secondary provider reaches five linked cases, they are to work with us to put in extra measures to prevent further spread. The new guidance on COVID-19 control prioritises keeping children in education and states that all close contacts of cases need to book a PCR test immediately unless they have tested positive by PCR test for COVID-19 in the last 90 days. Close contacts that meet the following criteria do not need to self-isolate:

- children under 18 and 6 months;
- adults who have been double vaccinated.

Close contacts do not need to isolate while they wait for their PCR result. Only children who test positive need to self-isolate. Children in the same class as someone who has tested positive do not need to self-isolate. We wish to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as much as possible. Therefore, we encourage more children to undertake twice-weekly lateral flow testing, and for close contacts to ensure they book a PCR test immediately. This does not change the national guidance that if you have a cough, change or loss in smell or taste, a high temperature, or if you test positive by lateral flow test you must self-isolate and get a PCR test. If that is negative, then you can return to usual activity.

We will ask your child's education setting:

Chief Executive: Mr. Andrew Martin, BA Hons, MA Ed

Head of School: Mr. Peter Lee M.Ed, BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

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- to contact you directly to inform you if your child has been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive student if we believe it is necessary;
- to be aware of COVID-19, and look out for wider symptoms such as sore throat, flu-like symptoms, and muscle aches;
- to advise anyone with the main three symptoms which are a new or worsening cough, loss or change of taste and/or smell, and a high temperature to stay at home, book a PCR test immediately, and only return following a negative result;
- to remind children to continue to conduct regular lateral flow testing (potentially daily for close contacts) and to rely on wider groups of contacts undergoing PCR testing (again, there is no need to isolate when waiting for the PCR test result, and anyone who has recently tested positive for COVID-19 does not need to undergo a test).

Further suggestions may be made should cases increase.

We ask parents/carers to support Public Health and your child's place of education by conducting lateral flow tests to prevent further spread. Close contacts will be asked to take a PCR. As always, we thank the community for continuing to do all they can to keep everyone safe.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Lee

Head of School

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