

Ref: GWA/LWO

18 October 2021



Dear Families

COVID update

As you know, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the incidence of COVID is not relenting and that its prevalence is currently greatest in children of secondary age. To give you some context, we have had 42 children receive positive PCR tests over the last fortnight. At the same time, 40 youngsters received negative PCR test results following on from positive LFTs during the period when up to 43,000 test results were deemed to have potentially been flawed at a test centre in Wolverhampton. Those students have been advised by the NHS to take a second PCR test.

The role of the school has changed significantly since September, hence the reduced frequency of my updates. We are focusing increasingly on what we do best - educating your children, catching up on lost ground and re-energising school with all the fun activities your children have been starved of for so long. I am delighted to say that our core business is going well.

The school is no longer charged with identifying close contacts of those testing positive for COVID. Tracking and tracing of those close contacts has been firmly in the hands of the NHS for some time although there is little evidence to suggest that the system is working effectively. You may well have been contacted directly by them but, to my knowledge, no contact has been made to the school to help identify close contacts of any of our children who have tested positive on PCR tests. We have not received any further information regarding the proposed timing of vaccinations for 12-15 year olds which are, of course, only for those offering their consent.

Given the high incidence of COVID and the likely need to begin to send children home if things persist, I would once again urge you to ensure your children are tested and report the results to the school. This weekend, only 53% of students reported a self-test result to the school.

As we go into a welcome break I can confirm that our control measures remain in place and that we continue to stress to the children the importance of personal hygiene. Whilst the incidence of COVID remains a concern, typically those students affected are experiencing little more than a common cold. School work, where possible, is being set on Google Classroom. Our staff, too, are increasingly suffering from COVID and, sadly, experiencing more significant symptoms. Securing supply staff is difficult as the pattern is replicated across the county. Please bear with us at this difficult time as we try to maintain both in-class and remote education when short-staffed.

It is my intention to write to you again at the start of November with a more uplifting summary of all the exciting things that are happening at the school. In the meantime, I wish you and your children a happy half term break.

Yours faithfully

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