Wednesday, 26th January 2022

**COVID update**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I just wanted to update you all on what has been a very challenging return to school, after the Christmas break. We are currently experiencing a high proportion of COVID-19 cases in our school community and particularly within a number of class groups.

From the 4th January to date we have had to report 53 positive cases of Covid, across staff and pupils, which equates to over 20% of our school population. Cases have popped up in a class and then spread rapidly through that class affecting staff and pupils.

We are directed by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Public Health team and schools are expected to follow slightly different procedures than those outlined on the government website. Where there is an identified class outbreak I am called to an Incident Management Team meeting and directed to follow outbreak intervention procedures to prevent wider transmission. Unfortunately, this has resulted in us being asked to close classes, 5 classes in total have been affected, 2 of which closed yesterday. This is obviously not what we want but at the same time we need to be sure that we have safe staffing ratios to keep classes operating and we just haven’t been able to guarantee this. One of the reasons is that those testing positive are still testing positive right up to day 10, even though the Government have reduced the isolation period, dependent on two negative LFD tests on two consecutive days taken 24 hours apart, from day 5.

We are trying really hard to keep classes going for as long as possible, asking parents to daily test when pupils have been identified as a close contact. Where this hasn’t been feasible we are having to treat those pupils as potentially positive cases so they have had to self-isolate.

Many of the cases have been asymptomatic and picked up through daily LFDs, however, we have also seen a number of cases where they have gone on to get a positive PCR test after several negative LFDs and vice versa.

We know you appreciate how difficult it is to make decisions, that meet the needs of all our staff and pupils, and make them in a timely manner. We also know that it is not easy for our families; it can be very frustrating for you and cause considerable inconvenience.

Where pupils are affected families are being contacted directly by school, usually via Jayne Duke. This way we can support you and ensure that you are clear about the specifics of each situation. This information will be supported in writing sent through parent pay.

We ask you to remain extremely vigilant as symptoms appear to be broader than the main symptoms listed below.  So, should your child display symptoms arrange a PCR test at the earliest opportunity.

We know you know that the main symptoms of COVID-19 include:

* **a high temperature** – this means they may feel hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to take their temperature with a thermometer)
* **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
* **a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste** – this means they may tell you that they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different.

However, secondary symptoms also appear to be flu like; runny nose, sore throat, ear ache, headaches.

We are doing everything we can to keep everyone safe in school, so we ask you to do the same when you are out and about. It is strongly advised that you and your families take care if visiting vulnerable individuals or attending large events or gatherings.

I completely appreciate that this is a huge ask, but in order to further prevent the spread of COVID-19 in our school community and get all our children back to the classroom, I would urge you to please support me with this.

I want to thank you for your continuing supporting and for bearing with us. Please be assured that we review the situation on a daily basis and where we can we aim to keep open and reopen up classes as quickly as possible.

Kindest regards



Headteacher