

9 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

The first week of a new half term was a busy one, especially given the imposition of New National Restrictions. We are doing all that we can to ensure that the school remains open for all students, and that their experience is as normal as possible.

Year 9 online learning has received positive feedback from many parents and I would like to thank staff and students for ensuring the live lessons were a positive experience whilst we gave the Year 9 bubble a circuit break to prevent further spread of any positive cases. Only one staff member and one student have tested positive from prior to half term, any cases in this year group since have been outside of the school environment which has meant the circuit break has certainly limited impact.

However, I would like to remind parents and carers **no student should attend school if they have any symptoms that could be linked to Covid-19 or they have been instructed to self-isolate due to a positive case.** If there is any question that your child has symptoms, they must not come to school, this puts their year group bubble and staff at risk of having to self-isolate which causes a significant impact on the wellbeing and education of members of our community.

- All pupils must bring in their own face-coverings; those who do not may be placed in isolation or sent home (the only exception is for students who have an evidenced medical condition that exempts them from wearing such a face covering).
- Students who have been identified by their doctor as still considered clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), are advised not to come into school. The government guidance on shielding and CEV people has been updated (see appendix A) to reflect this position. We will provide remote learning for any students in this category through MS Teams.
- Students who live with people who are CEV, but are not CEV themselves, are still expected to come into school.
- Students who are clinically vulnerable or have underlying health conditions but are not clinically extremely vulnerable, are expected to continue to attend school.
- Any student not attending school without official advice to self-isolate or medical evidence as CEV will be coded as unauthorised absence. The Local Authority decides whether each parent will be fined where the attendance drops below 96% without valid reason / medical evidence.

In line with the most recent guidance, we are trying to ensure that there is adequate ventilation inside our school building. With windows and doors open and the weather becoming colder, the temperature in some classrooms may be such that without additional clothing, students will become uncomfortably cold. Students should continue to follow our uniform expectation. If students are cold, they may now wear a coat over their normal uniform inside the school buildings. Any coat worn should not be in lieu of other items of school uniform.

Yours sincerely



Mrs N Lapskas

Appendix A: Definition of clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) groups

People who are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19. There are 2 ways you may be identified as clinically extremely vulnerable:

1. You have one or more of the conditions listed below, or
2. Your hospital clinician or GP has added you to the Shielded Patients List because, based on their clinical judgement, they deem you to be at higher risk of serious illness if you catch the virus.

If you do not fall into either of these categories and have not been informed that you are on the Shielded Patients List, follow the new national restrictions from 5 November.

If you think there are good clinical reasons why you should be added to the Shielded Patient List, discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.

Adults with the following conditions are automatically deemed clinically extremely vulnerable:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- those with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - people having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- those with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- those with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)
- those on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- adults with Down's syndrome
- adults on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)
- women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions