

2nd July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you regarding Covid and information about face coverings, ITV News, the confiscation of non-uniform items of clothing and a PE survey.

1. **COVID UPDATE**

As you are aware, there is currently a significant spike in the number of positive Covid cases in this area that is affecting numerous local schools. The situation is a fluid one and has built up significantly over the last 7 days. We currently have 30 students who have tested positive for Covid, largely concentrated in Years 7 and 8. As of Friday afternoon, our Covid cases are as follows:

- **Year 7:** 17 positive Covid results. The entire cohort should continue to self-isolate for 10 days, with a return date of Tuesday 6th July (*some individuals identified as a close contact have a return date beyond that date*).
- **Year 8:** 10 positive Covid results. Given the rapid escalation over the last few days, the entire cohort should stay at home on Monday, with a general return anticipated on Tuesday 6th July, pending a review of the next results of students' LFD tests on Sunday/Monday. Students identified as a close contact should continue to self-isolate ongoing (*see separate letters for students identified as a close contact, including those with a return date beyond that date*).
- **Year 9:** no positive cases
- **Year 10:** 2 positive Covid results with no close contacts linked.
- **Year 12:** 1 positive Covid result with 32 close contacts due to return on Tuesday 6th July.

Given the increasing number of Covid cases over the last week, we have been advised by Public Health England to expect all students to wear face coverings in lessons from Monday. Please ensure that your child brings a face covering to school every day to help keep everyone safe.

Schools are unique in having large numbers of people in close proximity on an hourly/daily basis so there is obvious potential for a mass outbreak if not carefully controlled. As such, we respond in accordance with government guidelines and in liaison with Public Health England. Hopefully, isolating Year 7 and 8 seems to have prevented transmission of the virus to other year groups, but this additional precaution makes sense given our current circumstances.

There are also numerous other students and members of staff off school either awaiting test results, affected by positive results in the family, friends in football clubs/Drama groups outside of school etc... or self-isolating because of sharing a school bus with a known positive case (from this or other local schools). For example, whilst we currently have no positive cases in Year 9, in that cohort 29 students are self-isolating for other reasons. It is a challenging time for many people.

It is a difficult balancing act knowing that as a society we must find a way to balance the risk proportionately without excessive restrictions, whilst acknowledging that the delta variant of Covid is

highly transmissible. We still have no idea what will be expected of schools in September. It seems as though there are 3 possible alternatives the government is considering:

1. Have no restrictions at all and treat Covid like flu.
2. Offer vaccines to pupils.
3. Replace self-isolation for close contacts with daily contact testing.

None of these options is without issues and we hope they will provide some detailed guidance urgently to help us plan accordingly.

2. ITV NEWS

The school is likely to feature on ITV News bulletins at some point this weekend. A film crew have been in school today interviewing some students and myself as a case study of the national story about increasing numbers of students having to self-isolate. We will tweet if/when we hear broadcast details.

3. PLEASE CONTINUE LFD TESTING

Please ensure that your child continues to test twice-weekly. The result of a rapid test could be positive, negative or even void. But whatever it is, **the outcome should be reported straight away, every time.** Recording all test results helps scientists stay ahead of the virus by spotting new outbreaks quickly and advising how to respond.

Reporting results is easy. Go to [report a COVID-19 lateral flow test result](#).

Please also **report to the school** via the attached link;

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=9MvSNrRjQEC2wd0f6DHTVWCKBeQnxE5LtN6oBJIcosFUMkhESzRWUEJEV01PUDk3WUZOWFZFUIhJRSQIQCN0PWcu>

Please also **report a positive result** via the school email covid19@stratfordschool.co.uk.

4. UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

Further to my recent reminders about uniform, as of Monday we will be confiscating non-uniform layers of clothing that students are wearing before they enter school in the morning and throughout the day. Students are not permitted to wear sweatshirts or hoodies. Students are expected to have the school quarter zip top as part of their PE kit. If they do not, then they will need to wear their blazer over the top of their PE t-shirt. Confiscated items will be available for collection as students leave at the end of the day.

5. PE SURVEY

Please encourage your child to help with a Sports England project the school is involved in, focussed on behaviour and attitudes towards physical activity. The survey should not take longer than 10 minutes to complete and will contribute to supporting the school in funding and sports development. A parental information sheet is attached for further information. The following link will direct you to the student survey: https://www.sircsurveys.com/f/1418034/fbc2/?LQID=1&SHUID=274&Student_Pre=Yes

In the meantime, thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,



Neil Wallace,
Headteacher