



2 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

***Re: COVID-19 update – September Return***

I hope you have all had a good summer.

As we will soon return to school and start the autumn term I write to inform you of the latest guidance on COVID-19 and how our aim is to reduce the disruption to students and their education.

Attendance is mandatory for all students of compulsory school age which means that it is your legal duty as a parent to send your child to school regularly.

**Face Masks**

The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in school but if your child or a member of staff wishes to wear one then they may do so.

They do not need to wear a face covering within the school, but it is expected and recommended that these are worn when travelling on public or dedicated transport.

For travel by public transport and the school buses, students are expected to follow the guidance and respect the requests from each individual provider summarised below:

- SJH Travel - Face masks are mandatory for all students unless medically exempt.
- Transport for London services - Face coverings must be worn on the Transport for London network, in stations, and for the whole of your journey unless medically exempt.
- First Buses - Following government guidance they recommend all students wear a face mask whilst on board unless medically exempt.
- Greater Anglia Trains - Students are required to wear a face covering at busy stations and on trains unless medically exempt.
- Nibs Buses - Following government guidance they recommend all students wear a face mask whilst on board unless medically exempt.

*Be The Best You Can Be*

## **Close Contacts**

Up until the summer term, when we were informed of a positive case we would trace the close contacts and when necessary send students or staff home to self-isolate. However, this is no longer the case. From 19 July, as with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will be working with the positive case and/or their parents to identify close contacts. As parents or carers, you may be contacted to help with identifying close contacts.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead, NHS Test and Trace will inform affected individuals, students or their parents or carers that they have been in close contact with a positive case, and advise them to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal, if the result is positive further information is available in the stay at home: guidance for households. [stay at home guidance](#)

18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated. At which point, they will be subject to the same rules as adults and so if they choose not to get vaccinated, they will need to self-isolate if identified as a close contact.

## **Lateral Flow Tests**

Continuing to take regular rapid tests will help to identify infections early and reduce transmission.

Home tests kits will be distributed to all students on Friday 3 September.

## **If a student tests positive for COVID-19**

Anyone with a positive LFD test result will need to:

- self-isolate in line with the [stay at home guidance](#)
- [book a further test](#) (a lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test) to confirm the result, whether the test was done at home, school or college

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within the 2 days following the positive LFD result, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and your child can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

From 19 July, as with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts.

Do not send your child to school if:

- they are showing one or more [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- they have had a positive test result
- there are other reasons requiring them to stay at home, for example, they are [required to quarantine](#)

You should follow public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#).

I hope the information in this letter clarifies the situation should any cases of COVID-19 arise in school, it goes without saying that we still need to act cautiously and use certain COVID-19 measures such as one-way systems, washing hands and sanitising.

I look forward to welcoming all the students back into school tomorrow.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Smyrk', written over a faint, circular, dotted watermark.

Ian Smyrk  
**Headteacher**