



Our Ref: SDN/KON

November 2020

ALL PARENTS/CARERS

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: COVID-19 Health & Safety and Remote Learning Update

I am writing to update you on the current procedures that are in place at Dormston School in light of COVID-19. With another lockdown now taking place and schools remaining open I appreciate that parents/carers may be anxious about what as a school we are doing to help keep our students safe and also how we will be maintaining minimal disruption to students learning during any periods of self-isolation.

As you will know, face masks are now compulsory in corridors and communal areas for both students and staff (unless exempt due to medical circumstances). Last week we issued a washable face mask to every student and this now forms part of our uniform policy. Our H&S procedures are being reviewed constantly and many safety measures are in place some of which include:

- risk assessments of all measures and constant reviews of practices to ensure we are up to date with government guidance and doing as much as is practicable;
- additional cleaning throughout the day of high touch points and communal areas;
- hand sanitiser stations installed throughout the school with more being added. These are frequently checked throughout the week to ensure they are filled;
- equipment boxes throughout the school to be used by bubble groups only;
- students to continue to come to school in their PE kit if they have PE on that day;
- split breaks and one way systems to reduce contact with others and outside space being used as best as possible;
- social distancing in place for staff and students to reduce risk of transmission between bubbles;
- quarantine of books and resources for 72 hours before being issued to students;
- track and trace system in operation for all positive COVID-19 close contacts;
- H&S posters displayed throughout the school reminding all students and staff of measures to reduce the spread;
- restricting visitor access to the school which may mean that some parental contact that would normally take place face to face will be done via telephone.

Possible Part Closure of School

To ensure that the school remains open it is important that we have the correct staff to student ratio. It will be no surprise to you that staff absence is higher than normal at this time of year. Most of the absences are due to staff isolating because of close contact with someone who has tested positive or because they are showing symptoms themselves. Today we have 22 staff, both teaching and support staff absent. This means we are coming very close to being unable to staff the school effectively. If staff absence increases it may become necessary to temporarily close access to one year group so that staff within school are able to cover absent colleagues. We will endeavour to notify you as soon as possible if this becomes necessary so that you are able to make childcare arrangements.

Remote Learning Arrangements

The expectation is that all students will follow their normal timetable. Work will be set by teachers on GO4Schools. Where live lessons are being delivered this will be done through Teams. Teachers will invite students to join the lesson so that they can see and hear what is happening in the classroom. If for some reason students cannot take part in the live lessons they can watch the video recording of the lesson. Learning will be a mix of live lessons and work set on GO4Schools.

In addition to this, our website now has a tab called 'Blended Learning' which directs students to resources for each subject for the autumn term enabling them to revise topics learnt already as well as keeping up to date with work being set.

Please ensure that your children are checking their emails and GO4Schools every day. If you have any issues regarding access to ICT or other technology please contact the school. We also attach a guide to accessing GO4Schools.

Virtual Parents' Evening Arrangements

We are now moving to Virtual Parents' Evenings for each of our year groups. This means that you will be able to book appointments via video link with your child's subject teachers to discuss their progress. More information and guidance will follow on this in due course.

What to do if....?

We know trying to do the right thing can be very confusing. Please see below frequently asked questions to assist you in dealing with any COVID-19 related issues in your household.

My child or household member has developed symptoms?

If you or a member of your household develops symptoms the **symptomatic person must get tested and immediately self-isolate. Other family members must also immediately self-isolate until the symptomatic person has their result.** This includes people in your support bubble. If the test comes back negative than the symptomatic person and household members no longer need to self-isolate and should return to work/school as normal providing they feel well enough to do so.

My child or household member has tested positive for COVID-19?

If you or a member of your household receives confirmation of a positive test result the entire household must continue to self-isolate. This includes people in your support bubble. Family members of the positive case must isolate for 14 days. The 14 day isolation period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill. The family member who tested positive must isolate for 10 days from when their symptoms began. If

your child tests positive please notify the school as soon as possible so that we can ensure effective track and trace is in place within school. Track and trace will contact the person testing positive to provide further advice and guidance.

A second child or household member has tested positive whilst as a family we were already self-isolating due to a positive confirmed case within the household?

If a second positive result happens within the 14 day isolation period then the isolation period for those who have remained symptom free will need to begin again from the day that the second person's symptoms began. Anyone who has tested positive will only need to complete their 10 day isolation from when their symptom began. We would suggest that you seek further advice and clarification from the track and trace service.

My child has been asked to self-isolate due to close contact of positive case within school?

If your child has been identified as being in close contact with a positive case '**within school**' they must self-isolate for the duration given by the school (the exact isolation period will be based on the last day that this positive case was in school and when your child last had contact with them). You will be notified by us exactly when your child will have to isolate until). Your child can return to school on the date given providing they do not develop symptoms. Any other children or family members can continue as normal providing they do not develop symptoms.

New Test Centres in Dudley Borough

Two new coronavirus test centres which are accessible on foot have opened in Dudley borough. One on Flood Street Car Park (off Oakeywell Street) Dudley and the other on Jackson Street Car Park, Lye. The sites bring local, free and easily accessible testing to the residents of Dudley borough. They will be open seven days a week from 8.00am - 8.00pm, appointments must be made in advance by calling 119 or visiting. www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

I realise that this is an incredibly frustrating time for students and parents. We all look forward to a time when we can put the face masks away and put the hand sanitiser back in the cupboard, until then we will try our best to ensure our students are safe and lessons remain as normal as possible.

You will be aware how important attendance is to us as a school to ensure students' academic, social and emotional wellbeing and having to send children home is the last thing we want to do but at the moment we must follow government guidance. I would like to thank all parents and carers for your understanding and patience during these very difficult times.

Yours sincerely



Mr S Dixon
Head Teacher