

10<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

**The School's responsibility to inform parents/carers that their child has to self-isolate-including during the Christmas holiday**

**- PLEASE DON'T BLAME THE MESSENGER!**

I hope you and your family are keeping well at this time.

I just wanted to update you regarding the School's responsibilities to inform parents/carers about positive Covid-19 cases within our school community, including during the Christmas holiday period.

As I have explained previously, the School is following the Department for Education's guidance in the current Covid-19 circumstances. This includes a clear procedure and clear timelines we have to follow to identify students and staff who came into close contact with a student or staff member who has tested positive for Covid-19.

We appreciate that the news that a student will need to self-isolate can be upsetting to both the student and his/her parents/carers. We also appreciate that this is particularly the case as we approach the Christmas holiday. The last thing we want to do is to have to inform you that your child has to self-isolate over the Christmas period, with all the implications that may bring. But we have to follow the Government guidance on this matter about informing all close contacts.

Please kindly note: **the School is obliged to inform parents/carers if their child is a close contact of someone testing positive right up until the end of term and also through the first week of the school holidays until the end of Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December.** Whilst we appreciate that some parents/carers may not welcome this, the School has to follow the Government guidance on this matter. So for example, if we are informed of a positive Covid-19 test result on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> December and the person concerned was in school the previous week, we are duty-bound to inform the parents/carers of any students whom we consider to be close contacts of the student or member of staff testing positive.

Please can I ask parents/carers who contact the School up until the end of Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> December when the School closes, to query the School identifying their child as a close contact of someone testing positive, to bear in mind the points I have made above and to communicate with our staff calmly and politely. Please don't blame the messenger! The School will not be checking messages after this date, apart from on the [positivetest@highamlaneschool.co.uk](mailto:positivetest@highamlaneschool.co.uk) email address.

After the School closes at the end of this term, as explained earlier, we will continue to inform by email any parent/carers whose child needs to self-isolate. We will do this until the end of the day on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December, in line with the Government's expectations on schools. So if your child tests positive between now and then, please let us know by using our special email address: [positivetest@highamlaneschool.co.uk](mailto:positivetest@highamlaneschool.co.uk)

**You do not need to contact the School from 24<sup>th</sup> December onwards** as we do not have to contact trace after this date. **If your child has had a positive Covid test result towards the end of the school holiday and will therefore be absent at the start of the spring term on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> January, please do email the school on the special email address above.**

Thank you for your understanding about this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

P.Kelly

Headteacher