

St Monica's R.C. High School

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23rd September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers of All Year 11 Pupils

You will be aware over recent days we have seen a number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the Year 11 year group. These have been initially confined to pupils who were in A Band. Today, there were two further confirmed cases of pupils in Year 11.

Given the challenges this situation continues to present, we have been in extensive discussion with the Health Protection Team today. We are doing the best we can to avoid inconveniencing parents and pupils on an almost daily basis. I do hope you can see that as a school we are trying to manage what is a very difficult situation. Given this, the decision has been made to close the Year 11 bubble for all Year 11 pupils on site from 4.00 pm today. We will now move all of Year 11 to online sessions with immediate effect starting on Thursday, September 24th.

It is the recommendation of the Health Protection Team that all Year 11 pupils now self-isolate until **Monday, October 5th**.

I absolutely appreciate this information is being shared with you at the end of the school day. I hope you can understand the reasoning behind the steps that we are taking. Please can you disregard any guidance on returning to school you have received prior to this.

We are asking you to do this to reduce the further spread of COVID 19 to others in the community.

If your child is well at the end of the 14 days period of self-isolation, then they can return to usual activities. A negative test does not mean that your child can return to school earlier than 14 days. Other members of your household can continue normal activities provided your child does not develop symptoms within the 14 day self-isolation period.

Symptoms of COVID 19

- The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:
- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Who is considered a close contact in a school setting?

A close contact is defined as a person who has had contact (see below) at any time from 48 hours before onset of symptoms (or test if asymptomatic) to 10 days after onset of symptoms (or test):

- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), including:
 - being coughed on, or
 - having a face-to-face conversation, or
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
- any contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact



- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle *with* someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or in a large vehicle *near* someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

Which contacts need to self-isolate?

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive and they had attended the school in the 48 hours prior to developing symptoms, direct and close contacts will be identified and advised to self-isolate. Please note: The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

How to stop the spread of COVID-19 during self-isolation

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- keep 2 metres away from people who you don't live with
- wear a face covering indoors in public places

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared as advised in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

You should arrange for testing for your child by:

- <https://www.bury.gov.uk/book-a-coronavirus-test>
 - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>
 - 111.nhs.uk
 - your GP
- All other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.
 - The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.
 - Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.
 - Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
 - If you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Support during self-isolation

If you become symptomatic, have to self-isolate and don't have any other support, Bury Community hubs are still here to help with food shopping and collecting medicine supplies.

How to get help during self-isolation

- Contact us by phone: Dial 0161 253 5353 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).
- Greater Manchester Text phone: Dial 07860 022876 (Messages will be responded to by the next working day)

Further Information

- Latest NHS information and advice about coronavirus (COVID-19)
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- PHE Staying at Home Guidance
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Further Guidance from the Headteacher

The letter I have shared with you is the standard template information provided by Public Health England. We are sharing this with you as we have received notification that a member of the school community has tested positive for Covid-19 this morning. I do want to try and reassure you that the procedures we have in place are effective. Once we received this notification in school, we completed the following actions:

- 1) Reviewed the timetable of the member of our community who tested positive.
- 2) Used this information to identify close contacts in individual classes, year group bubble and where individuals use the school bus.
- 3) I spoke at length with the individual who tested positive to ascertain as precisely as possible who proximity contacts are.
- 4) Shared this information with Public Health England and the Bury Health Protection Team and took their advice on what the next steps needed to be.
- 5) We have met with all Year 11 pupils who are affected this morning and I have shared with them this guidance and talked them through what the next steps would be taking.
- 6) We shared this information with the Chair of the Local Governing Board and Officers of our Academy Trust.

As of today, your child's work will be placed onto Show My Homework so they can complete this at home. We are in the process of setting up a virtual Form group so we can check on their wellbeing. We will write to you today with further details of this over the next day.

We are all living through a challenging situation, doing the very best we can. We will continue to support pupils whilst they are in self-isolation. As always, together we will find a way through this.

Yours sincerely



Mr C Foley
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