



Head Teacher Newsletter 16 September 2020



We have now been back to school for over a week and it has been lovely to see a full school again. The students have been absolutely fantastic. The school has been set up to minimise contact between year groups and adults and so far it is working really well. The different start and finish times are working effectively and allow us to stagger the timings of the day for all year groups so that they do not mix.

A huge thank you to parents for dropping off and collecting students closer to their start and finish times. This has helped to keep a safe distance between students and allowed us to get students moving to lessons promptly.

The school gates open at 8.15am and our first year groups begin learning at 8.30am, so we have a steady stream of students arriving until 8.40am. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated at present, ensuring that students do not arrive in school too early. Year 7, 8 and 9 students are based in the yard until they are ready to begin the day. So far, the weather has been really kind to us but we have no alternative other than to keep the lower school outside to minimise contact.

Our drop off area on the school grounds is really small, so congestion is a factor at the start and end of the school day. If at all possible, we would request that parents drop off students outside of the school grounds and allow them to walk the last part of the journey. It is great to see so many students walking and cycling to school and we would recommend these as our preferred ways of travel in this situation, if appropriate.

The scholar's bus will be open to all students from today. We have taken advice from the local authority transport team and as long as students are wearing face masks, sitting in bubbles and following hygiene and social distancing advice then we are happy to resume our normal service. The amount of students on public transport has also increased and we would endorse the government's stance on wearing face masks on all journeys and observing social distancing from other adults/groups of children.

Our attendance team has been inundated with questions/concerns from parents. We are happy to support and advise at all times and I have attached a link below to the latest advice from Public Health England on the latest procedures in school should you wish to read them. To date, we have no confirmed cases of any students/members of staff testing positive for Covid 19. We will continue to report any cases to our public health team and notify all parents as to any course of action. Please see absence guidance below for parents and carers from our local authority.

From Monday 21 September, we will be asking all students and staff to wear a face covering when in a communal area and corridor at school. This has been introduced to limit the risk of transmission of the virus in crowded areas. South Tyneside transmission rates have increased lately and most secondary schools are introducing this measure to protect both students and staff and ensure our normal service is maintained. Please contact your Pastoral Leader if you son/daughter is exempt from wearing a mask.

Thank you for your continued support in these ever changing times.

Ian Noble
Head Teacher

[DFE guidance – Covid 19](#)

COVID-19 (coronavirus) absence: A quick guide for parents / carers

What to do if...	Action needed	Back to school...
 <p>...my child has COVID-19 (coronavirus) symptoms*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Child should get a test • Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result • Inform school immediately about test results 	<p>...when child's test comes back negative</p>
 <p>...my child tests positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Child self-isolates for at least 10 days from when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) • Inform school immediately about test results • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - <i>even if someone tests negative during those 14 days</i> 	<p>...when child feels better, and has been without a fever for at least 48 hours</p> <p>They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of smell / taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone.</p>
 <p>...somebody in my household has COVID-19 (coronavirus) symptoms*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Household member with symptoms should get a test • Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result • Inform school immediately about test results 	<p>...when household member test is negative, and child does not have COVID-19 symptoms*</p>
 <p>...somebody in my household has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - <i>even if someone tests negative during those 14 days</i> 	<p>...when child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during the 14 days</p>

- Symptoms include at least one of a high temperature; a new continuous cough; a loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste. See more at: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms

What to do if...	Action needed	Back to school...
 <p>...NHS Test and Trace has identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with symptoms* or confirmed COVID-19 (coronavirus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Child self-isolates for 14 days (as advised by NHS Test and Trace) – even if they test negative during those 14 days • Rest of household does not need to self-isolate, unless they are a 'close contact' too 	<p>...when the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during those 14 days</p>
 <p>...we / my child has travelled and has to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take unauthorised leave in term time • Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice when booking travel • Provide information to school as per attendance policy <p>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days – even if they test negative during those 14 days 	<p>...when the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed for the child, even if they test negative during those 14 days</p>
 <p>...we have received advice from a medical / official source that my child must resume shielding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child shouldn't attend school • Contact school as advised by attendance officer / pastoral team • Child should shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again 	<p>...when school / other agencies inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again</p>
 <p>....I am not sure who should get a test for COVID -19 (coronavirus)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only people with symptoms* need to get a test • People without symptoms are not advised to get a test, even if they are a 'close contact' of someone who tests positive 	<p>...when conditions above, as matching your situation, are met</p>

**For further information:
www.gov.uk/backtoschool**