

19<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## COVID-19 Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

In the last couple of weeks we have received the great news that mass vaccination is imminent across our community and the country. During the last year this light at the end of the tunnel has seemed very distant. Vaccination, and large scale rapid testing have the capacity to positively change the risks we all face and lead to a much brighter future. For the time being we must address the here and now. In London there are rapidly rising number of cases, and the government has issued new guidance today. There is key information to share with you. I have outlined this in detail, with the key points at the end.

### Sharing news of any COVID-19 positive cases over the holiday

It is important that the school still acts to contain any risk of transmission, even though we are out of school term. The main way we must do this is to trace the contacts of any positive cases discovered in the days following the end of term where infection may have happened in the last days of term. To do this we will have staff available to help with contact tracing until 23rd December where necessary. **If your child tests positive for COVID-19 before 23rd December, please email [parents@kingsolomonacademy.org](mailto:parents@kingsolomonacademy.org) immediately.** This account will be checked at around 10am and 5pm each day until the 23rd December. Someone from the school will phone you and go through the usual contact tracing protocols which the school has been following. In the event that any staff member tests positive during this period we will also follow our usual protocol.

For any confirmed cases of Coronavirus after 23rd December and before the start of term on 5th January 2021, you should still let us know by emailing [parents@kingsolomonacademy.org](mailto:parents@kingsolomonacademy.org), but we will not do any contact tracing, as per government advice. The email will not be checked as regularly over the second week of the holiday and you should not expect a rapid response. You do not need to contact the school at all over the holiday if your child gets symptoms, or while you are awaiting a test, only if they have a positive test result.

### Positive cases in the school community

Over the last two days we have had two cases confirmed. Firstly, Gabby Woolf, Assistant Principal, has tested positive. Gabby's role is operational rather than pupil facing. She has had not proximity or direct close contacts with any pupils, parents or staff on her infectious period (Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> and Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December). Secondly, a pupil in 9 Manchester has tested positive. We have informed the class group to isolate, and confirmed there are no contacts outside this class or amongst teachers. We are pleased that the way we have used bubbles and distancing continues to reduce the risk and number of people impacted by positive cases. However, we know for the families of this class, this means a week of the holidays in isolation, and so we are grateful to them for adhering to this and protecting the wider community at this important time.

## **Tier 4**

The number of cases in London has risen dramatically in the last 2 weeks. In response, the government has placed London in Tier 4. This means that from tomorrow, Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, those living in London are placed significant restrictions to limit the spread of the virus. The relevant information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-4-stay-at-home>

## **Rapid Testing and January return**

At short notice, the government has shared their intention to have all secondary pupils tested on their return to school next term. More details will be provided by the government and when this is available and we know the exact information about all practical aspects of the testing we will write to secondary parents with this full and complete information, including the time when their child would be tested.

Full information about the testing in secondary schools [is given here](#).

As part of this plan, the government have said that some pupils will not return on 5<sup>th</sup> January as initially planned. Details are given [here](#). The groups start dates are:

### Return on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January:

- All primary pupils (including nursery).
- Years 11 and 13
- Vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers in Secondary

### Tested during 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> January; starting school on 11<sup>th</sup> January:

- Years 7,8,9,10,12

We will continue to update Secondary parents about the detailed plans for testing when they are clear and ensure that these plans are safe, deliverable and well communicated.

## **Summary**

- If your child tests positive before the 23<sup>rd</sup> December, contact the school immediately by emailing [parents@kingsolomonacademy.org](mailto:parents@kingsolomonacademy.org)
- If your child is in Years 7,8,9,10,12 they will return on 11<sup>th</sup> January. All other pupils including all Year 11, 13 and primary pupils will be returning on 5<sup>th</sup> January as planned.

I may need to write to you again before long, but until then, I wish you the very best at this difficult time and a peaceful and safe holiday period.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Haimendorf

**Principal**