

Dear Parents,

I hope everyone is having a positive, safe and enjoyable half term break.

Although we would normally try to avoid writing to you during the holiday, we have tried our best to be transparent and prompt in our communication with parents this term, and so I wanted to update parents about some recent developments regarding our efforts to ensure the school remains safe from Covid-19.

We continue to take advice from Ark Schools and Public Health England about any developments, including the details outlined below.

Firstly, two members of staff have tested positive for COVID-19 in recent days. A member of the operations admin team has received a positive test result. This staff member was already working from home as a precautionary measure due to possible contact with another member of admin staff who had previously tested positive, which I wrote to you about previously. This member of staff was not in contact with any members of the school community in the days prior to her symptoms developing and so no further action is required. In addition, a Secondary tutor fellow has also tested positive. We have gone through the process of tracing and contacting all relevant staff and pupils. One class, 9 Goldsmiths, will be isolating for 14 days, including learning from home in the first week back. As well as the pupils in 9 Goldsmiths, two members of staff have been identified as proximity contacts and will need to isolate for the 14 days from contact. They will be both working remotely in the first week back.

I can also update you that a pupil in Year 13 has received a positive test. This pupil had been following guidance and so had already been isolating due to symptoms in the household for 5 days prior to their own symptoms and then test, so there is no further action required as there was no exposure during the infectious period.

In total, we have had 4 positive staff cases. As outlined above, two of the cases may have been linked in the operations admin area, the other two are staff members who do not interact with them or each other. We have had 6 pupils test positive so far in total. These pupils have all been in different classes (5 of the 6 in different year groups). Speaking to the

families involved, in most cases other family members have received positive tests and/or symptoms before the pupil. We have needed to send home four different groups of pupils. 8 Bristol and 3 Hatfield have now returned and we look forward to the return of the isolating year 10 pupils after the holiday. We are sorry that 9 Goldsmiths will be learning from home in the first week back but are grateful it is just one week due to half term break. This “new normal” of having some pupils having to isolate at home for periods of time is far from ideal, but we feel as parents and staff we are coping well because it is something we have prepared for. Thank you to all the staff and parents for your support in making this work.

I would encourage you to continue to maintain all appropriate precautions outside of school, including limiting social interactions as outlined in the government’s guidance to try to minimise the spread in the community - in particular, not meeting others indoors if they are not from your household.

We continue to review our processes and update our risk assessment to ensure we are doing everything we can to inhibit the spread of Covid-19 and keep the school community safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Haimendorf
Principal