

Saint Bede's Catholic High School

Mr P Grice MEd
Headteacher

e-mail contact@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk
Website www.stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk



Talbot Road
Lytham St Annes
FY8 4JL

Telephone: 01253 737174

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am sure you will be well aware that we have had a confirmed case of Covid-19 in Year 9. You will be pleased to that know that neither the pupil or other family members are suffering from anything other than mild symptoms, and I know you will join me in wishing them a speedy recovery.

We have been in contact with Public Health England for guidance and they have advised on the appropriate response for all pupils in the Year 9 'bubble', namely that all Y9 pupils should self-isolate. We have written to parents of Year 9 pupils advising them that their child will need to stay at home and self-isolate until **Wednesday, 30th September** to reduce the further spread of COVID 19 to others in the community. All other pupils should continue to attend school as normal unless they develop symptoms of COVID-19.

What 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 the symptoms appeared. The symptoms are:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature and/or
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell

Anyone with symptoms is eligible for testing and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test-or-by-calling-119>.

As we have now had a confirmation of a positive test and the need for close contacts to self-isolate, I would like to set out how school will respond to any future cases.

Dealing with and communicating a positive Covid-19 test

Depending upon when school finds out about a positive test result, will determine our approach.

At weekends or in the evening, we will issue an alert through our website and social media sites that a particular year group will be asked to remain at home on the next school day following the confirmed result. This then allows us to contact Public Health England who will outline the steps that the school should take.

If we are alerted to news of a positive case during school hours, then we will look to send that year group home at the end of that day after isolating the pupil in question and arranging for a parent to collect them. We will advise you of the course of action we will be then be taking in terms of asking pupils to self-isolate via the website and social media.

What is a 'close contact'?

A close contact is someone who has been close to another person with Covid-19. Public Health England's definition for schools is anyone in the defined 'bubble' and also anyone who:

- has had extended close contact (between 1 and 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with a case, or
- has been directly coughed on, or
- had a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre, or
- had unprotected skin-to-skin physical contact, or
- travelled in a small vehicle with the case, or
- any contact within 1 metre for longer than 1 minute without face-to-face contact.

We will also need to consider how pupils have travelled to and from school and whether there is a need for other pupils outside of the Year Group bubble to self-isolate.

What does self-isolation mean – does my child have Covid-19?

Self-isolation means that we will ask your child to remain at home for up to 14 days. This means staying in the home/garden and not leaving for any reason. Being asked to self-isolate is a precautionary measure. It DOES NOT mean that we think your child is also positive with Covid-19, neither does it mean that you should seek a test for your child. 14 days is required because it can take this amount of time for any new potential case to become apparent.

Also, the 14 days starts from the last time your child had contact with the positive case. This may lead to a strange situation where, due to delays in tests and results, we may not be aware that your child is a close contact for a number of days. They could easily have been at school or other places for some time before they are asked to self-isolate. Even so, the guidance says the 14 days starts from their last contact and so we will adhere to this guidance.

No-one else, including brothers and sisters at the same school, will need to self-isolate. The only time other people in the household would need to self-isolate or seek a test would be if they developed symptoms of COVID-19.

The guidance is clear that even if your child does have a Covid-19 test and the result is negative, they will still NOT be allowed back into school until their agreed return date.

What if my child is told to self-isolate?

If we ask pupils to stay away from school, even for one day, they MUST remain at home. We have no discretion in this. The reason every child must stay at home until further notice is that they may also be infectious with Covid-19. Until we can establish whether they are a close contact or not, I must urge caution and ask your child stay at home.

I am so aware of the potential for further missed days and weeks of education so we would expect every child to complete the work that will be set for them via Firefly. As a school, we are determined that we develop online resources and plans that help to ensure that pupils who are self-isolating do not fall behind.

Who do I contact in the event of my child showing the COVID-19 symptoms during a weekend or school holiday?

During times when the school is open, please contact our attendance officer either by 'phone (01253 737174 option 1) or by email attendance@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

In the event of your child showing the COVID-19 symptoms and/or receiving confirmation of a positive test, we would ask you to email your child's Year Leader and Mrs Walker in the first instance:

Mrs Walker – Deputy Head – cwalker@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

Year 7 – Miss Cochrane – ccochrane@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

Year 8 – Mrs Langley – plangley@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

Year 9 – Mrs James – cjames@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

Year 10 – Mr Langley – plangley@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

Year 11 – Mr Frankel – mfrankel@stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk

I do apologise for bombarding you with a lot of information, but I am aware that this is a time when it may be helpful to provide reminders as well as additional guidance.

Thank you, as always, for all your help and support. I hope that you stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Grice
Headteacher