

Tudor Grange Samworth Academy

A Church of England School



Friday 6th November 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

As we enter a period of national restrictions, I wanted to write to you with some key updates and our response to the continually developing situation.

We know that the announcement by the Prime Minister about a further lockdown may have caused some anxiety. It is clear that whilst the view is that we have to be 'humble in the face of nature', the importance of keeping our children in education settings has determined the decision **to keep schools open**. Guidance on the new lock down measures to be implemented from yesterday, Thursday 5th November can be found [here](#).

We have been awaiting further guidance for schools, this was released last night and can be found on this website [here](#)

Our risk assessment procedures

To date, we have responded immediately to any identified positive cases or any children or staff with symptoms. We have detailed trust-wide procedures and identify contacts quickly to ensure that close contacts are sent home to isolate, this suppresses possible transmission of the virus in our school and will continue to be our key control measure. Where it is necessary, we will not hesitate to extend to partial or even full closure of our setting if we feel this is necessary to protect our community. Our senior leadership team is supported by a team of advisors for the trust and we are confident in our communication channels with the DfE and the Local Health Protection Team; we will continue to monitor the situation vigilantly so that you can remain confident in the care we provide. We know that informing you that your child needs to isolate causes you worry and disruption to your lives and is difficult for our pupils, thank you for your compliance in this essential control measure.

Current situation

You will be aware that cases locally and nationally are rising again. To date we have managed to keep exposure to this low, with just one case of a student being on site whilst being defined as infectious back in September. Subsequently a further student tested positive after half term but had not been on site so presented no risk to the school community. Two members of staff have tested positive in the last fortnight but again due to the good social distancing and preventative measures this has resulted in only a small number of students being required to self-isolate.

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We are now beginning to feel the impact of NHS track and trace app. This resulted in several members of staff, including myself, receiving instructions from the app to self-isolate. We have responded quickly to this and have managed to begin trialing the delivery of live lessons via Microsoft TEAMS. Teachers who have been forced to self-isolate have been able to deliver their lessons from home through this method ensuring continuity for our students. The students have responded very well to this and are becoming increasingly confident using this technology. We have planned several opportunities for students to be taught in this way so they are fully trained should they be forced to self-isolate at any point. This will enable your child/ren to keep attending lessons, even if they are at home.

Clinically vulnerable staff and pupils

We do have some staff and pupils who fall into the category of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and Clinically Vulnerable (CV); we constantly revisit our risk assessment for these individuals and we will do this again this week in light of the data that has been released and the announcement on Saturday. At the moment, for pupils this will be restricted to those who receive shielding letters from their GP. Please communicate directly with the school if you have any concerns that have you not already spoken to a member of staff about.

Ventilation and wearing masks (secondary pupils only)

We are constantly updating our operational risk assessments. One of the areas we are constantly reviewing is good ventilation as a key control measure. It is vital that we keep classrooms ventilated even as we enter the colder winter months. This week we will be reviewing all rooms across the site and working with staff to update our procedures. To ensure classrooms remain comfortable, we aim to ensure background ventilation throughout the lesson and to plan breaks so that the room is emptied of people, and windows and doors are fully opened so that there is a healthy exchange of fresh air.

It remains important that your child wears suitable layers of clothing (e.g. base layers under uniform and the additional of a school jumper / cardigan) we will allow them to wear their coats inside classrooms should this become necessary on very cold days.

It continues to be important that we have your full support and that your child, in secondary school, wears a mask in school when in communal areas, this is especially important in indoor communal areas. Please let us know if you need us to provide a mask for your child to use, remembering that a clean mask is needed each day. At the moment we will not ask that children or staff wear a mask in the classroom, but this may change again if infection rates continue to rise in our local area.

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If your child/ren do not have access to a lap top or desk top computer, please email office@samworth.tgacademy.org.uk as soon as possible.

Ensuring readiness for remote learning

We will always continue to prioritise the health and safety of our staff and pupils; this means that we will take immediate action when necessary. It is possible that this may cause significant disruption to your child's education over the coming months. We are working very hard to ensure that our remote education offer continues to improve rapidly, it is essential that you talk to your child about logins and passwords for access to MS Teams and SMHW (secondary) and Class Dojo (primary) so that we are all prepared to optimise time spent in remote education. Contact the school office if you do not have your log in details.

As an academy, we have been proactive in giving the pupils time and resources that allow them to completely understand how to access online teacher lessons. There are 'how to' guides that explain the online provision, how to access the real time lessons and ways in which we will continue to teach and learn in a home environment.

Please visit our website for the remote learning details.

Mental well-being

To date our staff have demonstrated unbending compassion and support for all students and for each other. There is a strong, shared understanding that we are all bringing different experiences to bear on the current situation, and that this affects how people will cope with the news that we have entered another period of national lockdown. I hope you feel you are able to talk to your child's class teacher/tutor or college/phase leader if you have any concerns or if you feel that your child needs help and support in any way.

Continued immediate notification of symptoms and test results

It continues to be of the utmost importance that you continue to follow the guidelines that are there to protect us all. It is important that you remain vigilant to the symptoms of COVID-19. If your child is symptomatic and you have arranged a test for them, please inform us using office@samworth.tgacademy.org.uk as this may provide additional information that may be useful for our conversations with Public Health England.

Your prompt communications with us are essential to our risk assessment, thank you for assistance in this. The current guidance remains:

What to do if students develop symptoms of COVID 19

If students develop symptoms of COVID-19, they should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing and this can be arranged via or by calling 119 or visiting this website [here](#) .

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You should also inform your school if your child becomes symptomatic.

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 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 are able, 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.

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)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 [online](#) or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

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

Please be reassured that we will continue to communicate with you regularly and openly.

Should you have any specific questions that you want us to address then please email office@samworth.tgacademy.org.uk and we will endeavor to respond within 24 hours.

I assure you that we will approach these coming weeks with the school community at the heart of all our decision making.

Yours faithfully,

Mr A Wilkinson
Principal

Mrs A Collins
Head of Primary

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