



16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

### **Update – 16<sup>th</sup> October**

I hope this letter finds you and your young person well. Following my letter to you yesterday, I wanted to make sure you are updated on the current situation at the College.

#### **1. What we has happened so far**

As you are aware, following a **single confirmed case of COVID-19**, we took the precautionary decision to ask one year group to remain at home today.

This was so that, in line with advice from the Department for Education, we could ensure we had thoroughly traced all close contacts of the confirmed case. **All of these people, staff and students, have now been contacted** and are self-isolating for a period of 14 days.

Parents and carers may want to note that the **definition of a close contact** is as follows;

*Close contacts are **any** of the following;*

- **a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including**
  - *being coughed on*
  - *having a face-to-face conversation within one metre*
  - *having skin-to-skin physical contact, or*
  - *contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact*
- **a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes**
- **a person who has travelled in a small vehicle** with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or **in a large vehicle** or plane **near someone** who has tested positive for COVID-19

DfE guidance also states that passing briefly in a corridor or playground is low risk.

#### **2. The Plan for Next Week**

At the time of writing we have **no further confirmed cases**.

Because of this, the **College will be open as usual to all students, including Year 11s, on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October**. The exception will be students we have notified to self-isolate.

As ever, we will be vigilant and continue to put in place the measures detailed on our risk assessment (available on the website) which help make the school as safe as possible. All of us, whether staff, students, parents or carers, can continue to make a positive contribution to reducing the risk of infection in our community by following these measures. The measures are;

- Making sure **anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus**; (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell) does not attend school
- **Cleaning hands regularly** and having **good respiratory hygiene** (by practicing 'catch it, bin it, kill it')
- **Increasing and enhancing the amount of cleaning** happening in school, especially during the school day
- **Minimising contact between individuals** and maintaining **social distancing** wherever possible.

### 3. **Reminder: Symptoms**

As always, if your young person has **any** COVID-19 symptoms (either a new continuous cough, or a raised temperature, or a loss of taste or smell) **they must stay home**. This also applies to students who may be self-isolating owing to suspected or confirmed cases within their households.

If the above applies to any student at any time then contact our attendance line on 01803 869200 ext 253 or email [studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk](mailto:studentabsences@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk). If your young person has to miss school because of the reasons above, please reassure them that we will provide access to remote learning for them and we will ensure it is matched to their school curriculum.

### 4. **Remote Learning**

Please refer to our **website area, 'Remote Learning'** if your young person is self-isolating so that they can continue their studies.

Please note, that in addition to the information on the website, we have written **to Y11 self-isolating students** today with some additional information about extra provision we have in place for them, including a number of live online lessons.

### 5. **Parent and Carer Feedback**

It's been extremely useful to have hosted fortnightly Q and A sessions online for parents and carers over the past 6 weeks. We will certainly continue this after the half term break.

This Monday, 19 October, our brilliant **Parents' Association** are hosting their **online parent and carer voice meeting**. I will also be present to help answer any queries or questions you have. It runs from 5pm to 6pm, and the link will be sent out to all parents and carers on Monday.

## **6. Masks and Face Coverings**

This issue we know has been discussed on several occasions at parent and carer online sessions. Our current policy is that **any staff or students who wish to wear face coverings may do so in school**. As staff we wear face coverings when spending time in others' lessons and when holding, for example, 1-1 staff meetings.

In addition, students must wear face coverings unless they have an exemption **when travelling on any bus to school**, and we are continuing to work hard with bus companies, parents and carers and students to ensure this is adhered to.

Our current risk assessment is that **we do not need to make mandatory, at this stage, the wearing of face masks** in indoor non-classroom areas such as corridors. This assessment is largely based on the arrangement of our year group bubbles and the physical layout of the buildings. Unlike some schools, our physical lay-out and the addition of extra toilets means we do not have corridor and social areas used by different bubbles at the same time. As well as this, any specialist practical spaces, including PE changing rooms, which are used by different year groups, are cleaned between uses.

Other schools in our local area with different physical layouts have quite rightly adopted mandatory mask wearing in social areas, as they are unable to have this degree of separation.

We are keeping this approach under review, as with all other COVID-19 risks. And, of course, if at any stage we feel it is necessary we will revise our policy accordingly.

Thank you again for the patience and support you have shown over the past 6 weeks. Please remember our half term holiday for students **begins on Friday 23 October** - this is a College training day and no students are required to attend.

As ever, please do contact us at the College with any questions and feedback you may have.

With best wishes,



Alan Salt  
**Principal**