



3rd December 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope this update finds you and your young person well. We are certainly now in the middle of winter, what with dark mornings and evenings, and today I noticed the first set of festive lights in an office, so it is ever more noticeable we are moving into the last part of term before the holidays.

This week

This term continues to fly past. These two weeks are especially busy, with all Y11s and Y13s sitting practice assessments in all of their subjects ahead of the exams next summer. Y11 have been amazing this week- as I write, they are ploughing through a GCSE Physics assessment in the Sports Hall – and our exams officer and invigilators have commented on how brilliant they have been throughout an intense week.

Christmas Concert: Wednesday 8 December 7pm-9.15pm

On top of this, rehearsals for our Christmas concert next Wednesday (8th December) are continuing, and we are looking forward to a great show. We are very nearly sold out of tickets, so get yours here <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/KEVICC>, or remember you can tune in live on the night via YouTube at www.youtu.be/QB8brGINT9g

Lesson Visits

This week has also been a lesson visit week - every third week all of us have visits to lessons from colleagues to help us develop our teaching, and to learn from (and steal ideas from!) each other's practice. We have been so impressed by the quality of learning seen around the College, from Y13 all the way down to Y7. A quick look @kevicc on Twitter or @kevicc.totnes on Instagram will give you an idea of some of the highlights!

COVID-19

Many parents and carers, and students, have asked questions this week about COVID-19 and the Prime Minister's announcement about the new Omicron variant last Saturday. Please rest assured we have updated our risk assessment and reminded students and staff this week of measures we are taking. Our latest risk assessment will be published on our website early next week.

The following are essential in ensuring the safest possible end to the term;

- Students and staff continuing to **LF-test** every Sunday and Wednesday. We have lots of testing kits in school, and all students have been encouraged to ask for spares as and when they need them. Every week these tests help stop infected students with no symptoms from coming in and having wider contact.

- Staying away from school if you have **symptoms** that might be COVID-19. Please don't be tempted to think "it can't be COVID". If you have a temperature, or a continuous cough, or loss of taste and smell, stay away from school and take a PCR test. Remember, if you have tested positive previously, or been vaccinated, this doesn't mean you can't be positive!
- **Carrying a face covering** and wearing one where you can indoors, and always in communal areas, especially in the serving area of the canteen and on school and public transport.

Whilst face coverings are not required in classes, we strongly encourage all of our young people to do so if they can, and it has been encouraging to see more students doing so over the past week.

We have spare face coverings that we give out to students, please consider the environmental impact of these and wherever possible ensure your young person has their own to use. Please also be reassured that we understand some of our young people and staff are exempt from wearing face coverings, and this will always be respected and has been highlighted with all year groups.

If you haven't yet informed us of an exemption to wearing face coverings, you can do so via the link here: <https://forms.gle/bewcjggsZh9puiSK7>

Current Situation

Some of you have asked recently, and at other times in the past 2 years, about the rates of infection in school. We have always decided it would not be appropriate to publish regular numbers, partly because public health authorities advise us not to do so, and also because of the administrative burden this places on us at a time where our focus is to ensure all cases are chased up and reported to Public Health England.

Given the renewed interest following the Prime Minister's announcement last week, I can let you know that this week has been challenging, and it has been our highest number of positive cases since late September. This increase mirrors the 37% weekly rise in infections in the South Hams over the past 7 days.

However, our numbers are significantly below the rates we had in late September. Your young person may notice people missing from their classes, but please do not assume these are all positive cases, as it is often a sign of families being careful and ensuring that symptoms are followed up with PCR tests. Added to this, we have had a large number of the usual cold season bugs which have hit students over the past weeks.

As always, please be assured that all of our cases are reported to Public Health England who work with us to identify any worrying patterns and take action accordingly. Equally, from this week, any suspected cases involving the new Omicron variant will mean close contacts have 10 days of isolation regardless of their age or vaccination status.

As ever, your feedback, comments or questions are really useful and important in ensuring we get things right in school. Please don't hesitate to email me on asalt@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk if you

have any questions. As well as this, we are holding another of our regular online Q and A sessions on Monday 6 December at 5pm using the meet code <https://meet.google.com/pph-uhjd-xts>

Your questions and feedback, COVID or non-COVID related, are warmly welcomed!

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Salt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alan Salt
Principal