

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope the first week of the new term has been manageable and I thank you for your continued support in what are very challenging times for us all.

Earlier today, via the school's social media channels, I shared a video update which reinforces some important messages and reassurances, as well as highlighting some of the classes who have impressed me with their levels of engagement in the first week of online learning. You can see this video on our Facebook page or watch in full here: <https://youtu.be/3xjKsvzQGxo>.

Following this, I would like to just reiterate some important messages as we continue into week two of the new term.

Critical worker/vulnerable children

We have over 160 pupils and students in school per day this week, classed as either vulnerable children or children of critical workers. Whilst we welcome these pupils and students into school, please ensure that you only request a place in school if you absolutely require one. Where possible, please do keep your children at home unless they are classed as vulnerable so that we can support the overall aim of reducing infection rates in the area and can continue to protect our community. As a reminder, please email criticalworker@QEGSBlackburn.com if you wish to request a place in school for your child/ren.

We understand the challenges of remote learning whilst parents and carers work from home and although we encourage children to follow their timetable as closely as possible, we do not expect all lessons to be followed live as we appreciate the difficulties of accommodating the balance of working from home whilst supporting the learning of your children. All teachers are available during normal school hours and are keen to support every pupil and student so please do encourage your children to use this support.

COVID updates

We have a duty to report to the Department for Education on the COVID-19 situation in our school and wider community. Therefore, please do keep us informed if your child is self-isolating for any reason. You can do this by emailing reportchildabsence@qegsblackburn.com or calling 01254 686300. In addition, if your child has to take a COVID-19 test, please email me directly with the details of the test date and the outcome, at the earliest opportunity, so we can continue to report this information to the DfE.

Remote learning

In the video linked above, I mentioned a few of our classes who have shown excellent levels of engagement in their remote learning. From our youngest pupils in the Primary Phase through to our students in Sixth Form, I have received wonderful feedback from teaching staff. Thank you for your role in this as parents and carers and please do encourage your children to continue with their hard work.

As mentioned in my previous letter, if you require equipment to aid with your child's remote learning, please email homeit@QEGSBlackburn.com and we will do our best to fulfil your request. We have a small number of devices left in school which we are happy to loan to pupils and students, regardless of their year group.

Finally, please follow the local restrictions that are in place. The more we all follow these guidelines, the sooner the rates of infection across the area will decrease and the sooner we can welcome back all of our pupils and students into school.

Below I have shared some information which has not changed since my last letter but serves as an important reminder should you require it.

Thank you for your continued support and I will continue to update you each week so please check our website and social media channels regularly.

Best wishes,

Mrs CY Gammon

Symptoms of Covid-19

The symptoms of Coronavirus (Covid-19) are a new continuous cough or a high temperature (over 37.8°C) or Anosmia (the loss of or a change in your normal sense of smell. It can also affect sense of taste as the two are closely linked). If your child or any member of their household has any of these symptoms, then your child must not come to school.

If your child is ill due to having symptoms of Covid-19, please notify school immediately, marking your email as urgent, follow the PHE 'stay at home' guidance, which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and arrange for your child to have a Covid-19 test immediately to ensure full engagement with the test and trace system. Please inform school immediately of the results of the test. A member of school staff will contact you during the first day of absence to confirm dates of the isolation period. This also applies if your child is isolating due to being in direct contact with someone who has symptoms of Covid-19.

If your child becomes ill with symptoms of Covid-19 during the school day they will be immediately placed in isolation (in accordance with government guidance) and you will be contacted and asked to collect them. If you cannot be reached, the other contacts given will be called as it is essential for your child to go home as soon as possible.

If your child has a positive result from a Covid-19 test, then they must inform the school immediately and follow the stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed Covid-19. They must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. The rest of the household must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'.

If your child has a negative result from a Covid-19 test then they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 10-day isolation period.

I ask that you keep a close eye on your children and do not send them into school if they are displaying any symptoms of Covid-19. This is to ensure the safety of the whole QEGS community. If you do decide for your child to have a Covid-19 test then please do not send them into school until the result of the test is known, even if they seem well.

If your child is self-isolating then please do email myself at head@gegsblackburn.com as we are endeavouring to keep detailed records of who is isolating and for what reason. The details that I need are whether they are isolating due to a member of the household or due to a close contact

outside of the household/school and, if so, what date the isolation ends or if they are isolating due to having symptoms themselves and, if so, have they had a test and when. If your child has had a test then please do email me the results so that we can update our records.

Shielding

If your child still requires to shield, then please contact Mr NH Vyse via email, nvyse@qegsblackburn.com, to explain the reasons why your child can not attend school. Mr Vyse will then contact parents/carers directly to discuss the situation including appropriate measures.

Travel

We ask that all parents and carers think carefully about how their child travels to school. Please read and follow the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#) when planning your travel. **If your child is traveling by public transport then they will be expected to wear a face covering.** The preferred method is to walk when possible following social distancing measures.