

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you, as always, for your support over the first few weeks since the half term break. For those members of our community that are currently isolating, I hope that you recover soon, that your symptoms are not too severe and that you return to good health quickly.

Whilst we are still in lockdown, please can I ask that you and your families do everything possible during this time to stay as safe as possible. This means following all local and national advice so that we can remain as a community as safe and healthy as possible.

Please can you remind your children of the basic messages of social distancing, good respiratory hygiene, wearing of masks for Year 7 and above and frequent hand washing. All children are reminded of this by their teachers regularly but, the more we all work together to deliver the same message then the more effective it will be.

If you have any Covid-19 related issues, including any test results or isolations, then please do email me in the first instance at [head@qegsblackburn.com](mailto:head@qegsblackburn.com).

The changes that we have made recently have been reviewed. We are very pleased with how Year 8 have maturely adapted to moving around the school site. We have reviewed the wearing of visors for teaching staff and, to ensure the safety of all when moving around the site and in the classroom, we have adapted this to:

### **Face Coverings**

Teachers must teach classes from their marked safety box unless they are wearing a visor and/or mask. All teachers must adhere to social distancing measures as all times. Staff supporting lessons, particularly with one-to-one support, have reviewed their individual risk assessments to ensure that they can deliver support whilst also keeping everyone safe. Whilst moving around the site, all adults must wear a mask and are encouraged to wear both a visor and a mask.

Children in Year 7 and above must wear masks whilst moving around the school site and in communal areas. Currently government guidance is that children should not wear masks in classrooms but we will be looking closely at this as the guidance develops over the next few weeks.

### **Primary Phase lunches**

This week we are trying the new rota system for Primary Phase lunches and we will continue to review all that we do to ensure that we remain as safe as possible.

In order that we can offer more frequent hot lunches during these colder months we are going to create a rota in which two primary phase year groups at a time have a sandwich lunch in their classrooms and all other primary phase year groups have a hot lunch in the dining hall.

### **Driving and parking**

Please can I ask all parents and carers to be considerate when driving and parking close to the school site and in the surrounding areas. We do aim to be a good neighbour to our local residents and currently some parents/carers are parking cars in a way that block driveways or damages gardens/green areas.

We also have had two near misses when children have not been supervised by the parents/carers during drop off. Please can you ensure that your children do know about appropriate road safety and please ensure that you drive around the roads closest to school very carefully. We are starting a

Road Safety campaign and the council do also have the ANPR camera which will continue to issue fines.

If your child does travel to school on a minibus that has not been arranged at any time through school, then it is also worth checking that the minibus company is complying with all safety measures, including the wearing of masks.

### **Sixth Form Taster Day**

There will be a Sixth Form Taster Day on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 which will involve all of our Year 11 pupils. Please, if your child has not already done so, can you ask your child to complete the Sixth Form Application Form, which is available on our website [here](#), so that we can create a timetable with their A level option choices for the day. This is a useful day for all pupils, whether they choose to stay at our Sixth Form or not, as it enables them to try the different A level subjects in order to gain a greater understanding of their content and delivery. **Year 12 and 13 will not be in school on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December and instead must use this day as a home study day.**

### **Assessments**

During the rest of this term, assessments will start for Year 7, Year 8 and Year 10. Timetables will be issued soon but please do support your child at home with their revision to enable them to feel as prepared as possible for the examinations.

Below I have placed a series of information which has not changed since my earlier letters but is a useful reminder of what school is expecting this half term.

Kind regards

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 14 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 14-day isolation period.

I realise that you will be naturally concerned regarding children self-isolating. I do hope to limit the number of times any year group/ group of children do have to spend time in self-isolation but I am sure that you understand that this may be out of my control. Each time we are informed of a positive case, we do work with the DfE Covid-19 response team and the local education response team to identify any children or staff that could be close contacts. Our aim is always to keep as many children in school as possible whilst ensuring that all members of the school community remain as safe as possible. These decisions are not made lightly.

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@qegsblackburn.com](mailto:head@qegsblackburn.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.

If your child is isolating their work is available through Google Classroom and Class Charts. We endeavour to ensure that it is available as soon as possible matching the timetable as close as possible however, sometimes we do have a delay of 24 hours due to ensuring that teachers are able to upload work alongside teaching in school. Please ensure that your child looks at all their subjects each day for work even if they do not have a certain subject on that day. We are providing some live lessons but the quantity of these of these does depend on the workload of individual staff and how confident they feel in delivering these alongside their normal busy working days. You will find, however, that over the 2 week timetable, there will be at least some recorded elements for all children in all subjects.

### **Shielding**

All children must be attending school from September and school has been informed to resume the process of issuing fines for those who have periods of unauthorised absence. If your child still requires to shield, shielding was reviewed on 5<sup>th</sup> October, then please contact Mr NH Vyse via email, [nvyse@qegsblackburn.com](mailto: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.

## **Absence**

Should your child be ill then you must report their absence either via email on [reportchildabsence@qegsblackburn.com](mailto:reportchildabsence@qegsblackburn.com) (this is the preferred method) or via phone 01254 686300 choosing option 1. In both cases you need to state the name of your child, their form and year group, the reason for the absence and when you expect them to be well enough to return to school. This must be completed on every day your child is absent.

## **Face Masks**

### **Primary Phase**

During the school day, children in Year 6 and below will not be wearing face masks. If a child arrives at school with a disposable face mask then they will be asked to dispose of it in an appropriate manner. If a child arrives at school with a reusable face mask then they will be asked to remove it and to place it in a clear plastic bag, which must be provided by parents/carers, ready to take home at the end of the day.

### **Secondary Phase**

Children in Year 7 and above must arrive at school with a face mask that they can use during the day when they are moving between lessons and in communal areas where social distancing will be difficult. Please show your child how to put on and take off a face mask safely and please provide a clear bag for storage of your child's face mask when not in use. We ask that you emphasise to your child the importance of using face masks appropriately, of washing/sanitising hands after touching face masks and the storing of their face mask safely.

## **Ventilation**

As part of our risk assessment for the school we have ensured that all rooms are ventilated with open doors and windows. Now that we are moving to the colder months we have been reviewing how is best to move forward. What we are now asking is that your child comes to school with a jumper (sweatshirt type or hoodie) which they can wear under their blazer or a warm coat. A judgement will be made by the teaching member of staff in each room as to whether jumpers and coats should be worn and this may be different on each day, room dependent on the conditions in a particular room. This is a temporary change to the uniform rules and we hope to revert back to normal uniform as soon as possible.

## **Computer Access**

We have fully linked all our schemes of work to remote learning so that any child who is isolating can continue to access the curriculum. We are aware that some children did experience problems with accessing remote learning during the earlier lockdown and situations may also have now changed due to individual circumstances. If you feel that your child would struggle to access remote learning in the future due to the equipment available to them at home, then please email [homeit@qegsblackburn.com](mailto:homeit@qegsblackburn.com) stating your child's name and year group and the issues that your child would have so that we can see as a school if there is anything that we can do to provide support. Alternatively, please write a letter addressed to Mr Vyse, marked as Home IT, which your child can hand in at Main Reception.

## **Behaviour**

It is essential that all pupils and students display exemplary behaviour at all times including being kind and patient with all members of the school community. Please can you reiterate to your child the importance of following social distancing measures, good respiratory hygiene and washing/sanitising hands frequently. These are the most effective ways of keeping us all safe and therefore we will treat any breaches of our safety measures extremely seriously, sanctions will be imposed and parents/carers contacted.