

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have managed to have a peaceful and safe half term break and that your loved ones remain well. For those members of our community who are currently isolating, I hope that your symptoms are not too severe and that you return to good health quickly.

As we move into a new lockdown period on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November, please can I ask that you and your families do everything possible during this time to stay safe. This means following all local and national advice so that we can remain as safe and healthy as possible, as a community.

Please can you remind your children of the basic messages of social distancing, good respiratory hygiene, wearing of masks for Year 7s and above, and frequent hand washing before they return to school on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November. All children will be reminded of this by their teachers in the morning but the more we all work together to deliver the same message then the more effective it will be.

I do need to bring to your attention the requirement to self-isolate if you have travelled abroad to certain countries. If your child has travelled abroad during half-term, please email me at [head@qegsblackburn.com](mailto:head@qegsblackburn.com) stating which country you have visited and your dates of travel, including when you arrived back into the UK.

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

We are making a couple of changes to our current arrangements. The changes we are making have all been thoroughly risk assessed and we believe are essential to ensure that we continue to deliver the best possible education for our children.

### **Curriculum Change**

From Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, Year 8 pupils will be following their individual subject timetables, which will mean that they will be moving around school in order for them to be able to be taught in subject specialist rooms. It is essential that pupils follow the one-way systems around the school site and that they obey social distancing procedures. Each room has a number of cleaning stations and all pupils will be expected to use, under the instruction of their teachers, the anti-bacterial sprays or wipes and hand sanitiser when they enter classrooms, alongside hand-washing at breaks and at lunchtime. Their day will comprise of registration, lesson 1, lesson 2, break, lesson 3, lesson 4, lunch, registration, lesson 5 and lesson 6. Homework will continue to be set and submitted where possible through online resources. There are no changes to the curriculum for any other year groups.

### **Face Coverings**

Teachers will be wearing a visor when teaching all lessons. This is to ensure that the risk of transmission between adults and children is kept at a minimum. Whilst moving around the site, all adults have been asked 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.

### **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 regarding this. We are asking that your child comes to school with a jumper (sweatshirt or hoodie) which they can wear over their shirt and tie but under their blazer, and/or a warm coat which can be worn over their blazer. A judgement will be made by the member of teaching staff in each room as to whether jumpers and coats should be worn and this may be different on each day, dependant 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.

**Lunch Change – The change stated below for Primary Phase has been delayed until Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November due to the availability of staffing. Until then we will continue to alternate hot and cold food days in the same way we have done since September 2020.**

Primary Phase:

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.

Secondary Phase:

Year 7 will have lunch in the Dining Hall from 12:25.

Year 8, 9, 10 and 11 will have lunch in the Dining Hall from 13:00 following a rota with just one year group at a time.

Rotas are used to enable social distancing to take place as well as more frequent cleaning for all of our year groups.

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 blocks driveways or damages gardens/green areas. We also have had two near-misses last half term 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 will be starting a Road Safety campaign shortly and BwD Council do have the ANPR camera which will continue to issue fines.

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**

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### **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 continue to report periods of unauthorised absence to the Local Authority, who issue penalty notices. If your child still requires to shield, 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. 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.

## 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 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.