



8 October 2020

Dear parents and carers,

I am writing to inform you that there have been two further confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Highlands School in the past 24 hours. One is in year 8 and one is a member of non-teaching staff. I am sure you will join me in wishing them a speedy recovery.

Year 8 are taught in half year group bubbles, so those in Willow and Beech have been sent home and told to self isolate in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education. Those students will return to school on Monday 19th October. Students in Rowan and Oak will continue to come to school as normal. Please note that the school does not decide which students self isolate or remain in school, we ring the government COVID-19 phone line for educational establishments and they advise us on what to do.

Anyone who came into close contact with the staff member who is infected has been asked to self isolate.

All students who have not been told to self isolate should be in school as normal.

Students who are working from home will have their work set on Google Classroom.

I know that when we make decisions around the safe running of the school and COVID-19, parents and carers have lots of questions, and we do our best to explain our decisions, but I would ask that you refrain from contacting the school unless it is absolutely necessary. We have a limited amount of capacity as a school to respond to phone calls and emails and the more time that we devote to this, the less time we have to carry out the day to day work of making the school run safely in these challenging times. We have all been overwhelmed by the support we have had from the school community since the start of lockdown but please keep in mind that the staff at Highlands are working flat out to maintain an in person and online teaching programme for our students, whilst working under an entirely new set of routines and systems in school.

As always, I thank you for your ongoing support.

The information below relates to what to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19.

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school and should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

All other household members who remain well, must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days. This includes anyone in your 'Support Bubble'.

Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home. If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community

If you are able, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>. If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Yours sincerely,
Vincent McInerney
Headteacher