



18th July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Covid Situation update - Year 7 and 8 to move 'online' for Monday and Tuesday

Following Thursday's letter where I referred to a number of positive cases that had emerged on Thursday, we have been informed of a number more positive tests over the weekend. In total we have had twelve positive cases since Thursday morning, ten of which have been in Year 7 and 8.

We have tracked close contacts of all cases; around 100 students in each of Years 7 and 8 have now been asked to self-isolate. Although we are confident that we have contact traced as far as reasonably possible, there is some evidence of transmission within the yeargroup bubbles and it is therefore likely that further cases may emerge from Monday's Lateral Flow Tests.

Although guidance for 'Step 4' changes means that responsibility for contact tracing moves from schools to 'NHS Test and Trace', the local Health Protection Team have advised that, given the cases we currently have (as with many other schools), we should continue to contact trace until the end of term (it seems strange that we would suddenly 'stop' for the last couple of days of term anyway).

We have also had a rising number of staff needing to self-isolate, largely as a result of cases in their own households, or where their own children are required to self-isolate having been identified as close contacts, meaning that our ability to cater for any more disruption is very limited.

Following liaison with the local Health Protection Team, we feel that, on balance, it is best to move learning for **Year 7 and 8** online for the last couple of days of term based on operational grounds. This will enable all Year 7 and 8 students to access their lessons (which will take place online via Microsoft Teams). For any Year 7 or 8 students unable to access their lessons online please complete the following short form by this evening and we will seek to make appropriate arrangements for them to do so:

<https://forms.office.com/r/cBeDgxKGiD>

For any Year 7 or 8 students who need access to the school site (e.g. to empty lockers) we ask that they come onsite do this between 3.15pm and 4.30pm tomorrow (Monday). If any parents of self-isolating students wish to do so, then please come to the Main Reception between these times.

Headteacher: Mr T W Inman, BSc

Gordano School, St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR

Tel: 01275 842606

Email: mailbox@gordanoschool.org.uk www.gordanoschool.org.uk

Lighthouse Schools Partnership. Registered address: St Mary's Road, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7QR
A charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales (Company Number: 07662102)



Years 9, 10 and 12 will continue to attend school as usual. There have only been two cases across the whole of these yeargroups in recent days and we are very confident that, with the yeargroup bubble system and the minimal contact tracing we have needed to do, we have been able to contain the risk.

For those concerned about the impact of self-isolation on forthcoming holidays, there is another important change for school settings from tomorrow. For any positive cases notified to the school from tomorrow morning (i.e. after midnight tonight), close contacts will still be identified (as we have been advised above), but will not be required to strictly 'self-isolate' - the new guidance is that 'they must not attend school and are recommended to limit contact with others' during the ten-day period. This does not apply to cases where the school has been made aware up to this evening (i.e. the strict self-isolation requirement remains). This may seem a very arbitrary line, but any change in position needs a line to be drawn somewhere.

This is certainly a year that has kept on giving right to the end! I acknowledge that the disruption for Year 7 and 8 parents over the next couple of days may be frustrating. As ever, there is no single 'right' answer, but we feel that this move is in the overall best interests of the community and I really appreciate your understanding at another challenging moment in our Covid journey.

As promised, I will write again on Tuesday to mark the end of the school year.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Tom Inman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Inman
Headteacher