

2 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

We hope that you and your family are well and have had a nice break from school. As we return for the second term and lead up to Christmas I wanted to write to inform you of some key messages that all parents need to be aware of and act upon. Of course, across the country it is a difficult time and just this weekend another national lockdown was announced. However, schools do remain open and we encourage all students to come to school if they are well enough to do so. We will of course continue to ensure that measures to improve health and safety and reduce the risk of transmission are in place and we ask for your support in ensuring that students adhere to these. Additionally, I would like to remind parents that should any child or member of your household have symptoms of COVID-19 then they must not come to school, and instead get tested before returning. Also, given that we have had 2 weeks away, please do let us know if there have been any positive tests in your household over the break that we are not aware of.

### **Success of term 1 at Cathedral**

It was a great first term at Cathedral, with a good level of attendance and great engagement from all of our students. We were also delighted to be able to remain open for the vast majority of students throughout the term. The success of our systems was down to the vigilance of all staff and students and the support of parents in making sure that we stringently followed some very clear and simple steps. These steps are once again in place for term 2 and are outlined below. It will be very important for us to continue to observe these throughout this term.

### **Important health and safety measures this term**

The measures in place are as follows:

- Staggered arrival and departure and specific areas for entry to school.
- Strict use of face coverings in corridors. Please note that students must wear either the face covering we have provided or a plain black one of their own.
- Regular use of hand sanitiser and hand washing.
- One way system throughout school.
- Regular cleaning down of desks/changing areas and mini whiteboards.
- Use of own stationery and equipment.
- Separate social spaces for each year group bubble.
- Strict approach to ensuring that staff and students with symptoms do not attend school or are sent home as soon as possible when symptoms occur.
- Adhering to the national guidance including lockdown outside of school. This means that students must not be mixing outside of school.

The staggered departure times are as follows, there is a slight change for Y8 and Y9:

- Y7: 2.25pm, Y8: 2.30pm, Y9: 2.35pm, Y10: 2.40pm, Y11: 3.40pm

## **Remote learning**

Whilst we will continue to do everything we possibly can to ensure all students can remain in school, we know that the pandemic is far from over and that some students will have to remain at home at times, either because they are ill or they have to self-isolate. We are determined that nothing will stand in the way of students' learning and we have had to adapt quickly to ensure that even when students cannot be in the school building, their learning does not stop. For this reason, we have worked hard to develop our online learning platform through Microsoft Teams. This is a fantastic resource which provides students with a virtual classroom environment where they can access all of their lesson materials. This is far more than a contingency for Covid-19, and it has huge potential to enhance the learning experience for all students. We will continue to communicate developments in our use of Microsoft Teams as it becomes more embedded in our daily practice at Cathedral.

All students have been trained on Teams, and therefore if they are required to self-isolate, they should follow their normal timetable, completing the lessons they have been set on Teams. A reminder of how to access lessons, is attached to this letter. Please do remind your children, if they are off, that it is an expectation that they complete their schoolwork, as long as they are well enough to do so. If we are required to isolate an entire class or year group, you will receive further guidance on how we will structure their lessons online. Please do get in touch if you need any support with accessing Microsoft Teams at home.

## **Notification process for a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) to parents and carers**

Now that we have completed the first half of this term, and having worked in partnership with local public health teams and Public Health England (PHE), an agreed process has been embedded on how and what we as set of schools should communicate to parents and carers.

We thought it would be helpful to set out the agreed process that we have established with local public health and PHE, which complies to the General Data Protection Act 2018, as of course we are dealing with personal health data, which is defined as special category personal data and is subject to a higher level of protection in law.

The agreed process we are operating to is as follows:

- For an isolated positive case, where the close contacts (see the definition of close contacts below) can be identified, we will write to these contacts and the parents directly, as the student will need to self-isolate.
- If a 'bubble' is closed, the academy will write to all the parents/carers of pupils in that class/year group to self-isolate. In addition to this, a general communication will be sent to all parents/carers in the school to explain what has happened and in which year group. Please note any close social contacts identified will also be written to and asked to self-isolate too.
- If a member of staff has tested positive, then an assessment is undertaken to establish which classes and individual pupils are affected and any close contacts are then written to so that they can self-isolate.

Additionally, it is worth noting that in some instances, it is possible that even though a pupil or member of staff has tested positive, a bubble might not need to be closed and people might not be asked to self-isolate. This is because the person who has tested positive for Covid-19 was not in attendance at the school during the infectious period. Public Health requires detailed information from the school in all cases and an assessment is made; the school is then guided as to what those next steps are.

What is meant by close contacts?

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:

- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19;
- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:

- being coughed on;
- having a face-to-face conversation within one metre;
- having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
- contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact;
- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 for more than 15 minutes;
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for Covid-19.

We trust the above information provides clarity on when the academy will or will not write to you regarding any positive cases that are reported to the school.

We would also strongly encourage all parents/carers to work with us as we deal with positive cases to avoid unintended consequences for others. **If your child develops symptoms, is being tested or has a positive result, the academy needs to know straight away, as we need to act immediately with our colleagues in both local public health and Public Health England to assess the situation and then take the appropriate actions.** The earlier we know, the earlier we can act and reduce the risk of onward transmission of the virus.

Finally, we would also encourage parents/carers to consider carefully what is posted on social media regarding positive cases, as without having the full context this can cause distress and upset to other parents/carers by only providing partial information for which an incorrect conclusion may be reached.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and cooperation in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P Knight  
Chief Operating Officer  
Trinity Multi Academy Trust

Rob Marsh  
Principal

### **Further Information**

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