



Bexley Grammar School
Danson Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 2BL
A Specialist Language College and
IB World School
Tel: 020 8304 8538

Headteacher: Mr S C Elphick

e-mail: enquiries@bexleygs.co.uk

Sent via ParentPay 3rd December 2020

Reassurance despite another confirmed case

Dear Parent/Carer,

You will be receiving yet another email and 'confirmed case' letter today.

With the succession of emails this week (following DfE/PHE protocol) I would like to reassure you by providing a little more information than I am supposed to reveal.

I know it must be very frustrating not to know who the individuals are with each letter you receive - you are having to hand over considerable control of your child's safety and, perhaps more importantly, the safety of your household and vulnerable relatives to us, to me. Whilst I do not relish this responsibility, I am taking it extremely seriously, following all the guidance and liaising with Public Health at every turn and making judgements based on the information available to me at any given moment. Identifying contacts can never be a perfect science but the evidence of the 12 school weeks of this term so far is that it is working effectively.

The two confirmed cases on Sunday prompted the self-isolation of several students in year 13. We have since been notified of 4 confirmed cases in the same year group (including today's letter) and in tracing the contacts, many overlapped with those students already isolating because of the first cases. Each time, new close contacts have also been identified and sent home because friendship groups, of course, do not match up exactly. There may still be more cases from those who are already isolating but they are unlikely now to involve new contacts who are still at school because they have not been in school for several days now.

Before this week, we had had only 4 cases in 3 other year groups - a reassuring statistic in a school of over 1400 students over 11 weeks.

I hope that in divulging this, albeit limited, information, I have provided some context for the communications you have been receiving this week and reassured you that we continue to apply our track and trace system rigorously.

Best wishes to you all.

Keep safe,

Steve Elphick



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Date: 3 December 2020

Advice to All Parents/Carers

Dear Parent/Carer,

We have been advised this afternoon that there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school. Please see my earlier letter today about the recent group of cases.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and are following government guidance. This letter is to inform you of the current situation and provide advice on how to support your child. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. Please see the information at the end of this letter.

The parents of the small number of children who have been in close contact with the individual who tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) have been informed that their child must stay at home for 14 days.

The school remains open and, if you have not been contacted separately, your child should continue to attend as normal if s/he remains well.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SE Elphick', written in a cursive style.

Steve Elphick
Headteacher

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/>