



**Bexley Grammar School**  
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A Specialist Language College and  
IB World School  
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27th June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Urgent - Important information - Covid-19 outbreak - Please do not send your year 9 child to school tomorrow.**

**Year 9 bubble closure - return to school on Tuesday 6th July.**

I apologise for this dramatic wording and for writing to you at the weekend but at the time of writing we have been informed of 9 positive LFD tests in year 9, of which 4 have been confirmed positive by PCR tests.

Many of the close contact lists supplied by the positive cases contain the same names but the compiled list of students now runs to 78 students, approaching half of the year group.

**I have made the decision to close the school to year 9 students from tomorrow, Monday 28th June until Monday 5th July inclusive** for the following reasons:

- Public Health England and the DfE recommend closing a whole bubble as a last resort but use 5 positive cases as an indication of a possible outbreak in a bubble. We have 9 cases.
- The positive cases are across 3 form groups and close contacts are from 5 out of the 6 forms in year 9.
- Most year 9 lessons are taught in classes of mixed form groups, so, on average most lessons would have nearly a half of their students at home and some lessons taught in forms will have two-thirds or more missing.
- Teaching and learning will be more effective where the teacher is able to teach the whole class virtually rather than try to teach some in class and some virtually. Students will follow their timetable during the day as they did in the most recent lockdown, experiencing a range of delivery methods.

I am very aware of how disruptive this will be for you and your family. **However, unless your child is one of the 9 positive cases, the rest of your family does not need to self-isolate.** If you have not received a separate email identifying your child as a close contact, your family, including your child, does not have to self-isolate. However, it would be prudent to treat your child as a potential case and for your child to take an LFD test regularly and alert us if you receive a positive result.

(In order for Public Health to track the prevalence of the Delta variant, PCR testing is now required for all identified close contacts of confirmed COVID-19 cases. If you have received an email because your child has been identified as a close contact, your child must now:

- Stay at home and self-isolate for ten full days after the date they were last in contact with the person who tested positive; and
- Arrange a PCR test as soon as possible, and inform the school of the result when received.
- **A negative PCR test no longer allows them to return to school.)**

(Anyone who has received a positive PCR test result is advised not to retest for a further 90 days as subsequent results may not be accurate.)

I will review the situation tomorrow and take further advice but in light of the positive cases that have been reported this weekend and the advice I have taken from Public Health, I see no other safe option.

Please check with other parents of children in year 9 at BGS, through any social media contacts you may have, that they have picked up this email today to ensure that everyone receives the message.

Finally, the timing of this is especially frustrating because it is a **Power Day** tomorrow. At the time of writing, I am unclear how, or even if, any of the day can be delivered remotely for year 9 tomorrow. Please be patient and understanding - while Tuesday onwards should work as it has before, virtual learning may be an issue tomorrow. Also, the **HPV jabs** planned for Wednesday will have to be rearranged.

I apologise again for this disruption.

Yours sincerely,

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

Stephen Elphick