

Headteacher update - 15

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have made it to the end of a long and challenging Autumn Term, we would like to thank everyone for their support and understanding, we have been in uncharted territory and whilst we are not yet in clear waters the end is in sight.

We are pleased to say that since writing to you last week we have had no further positive cases, we are hopeful that this continues over the Christmas Holidays.

There have been a number of announcements this week regarding next term. Firstly, there was an announcement about mass testing for Covid-19 in secondary schools. At this point details of how this will work or when it will start are very sketchy, we have many questions and few answers. It's a sensible move forward that should keep as many students as possible in school and avoid the need for high levels of self-isolation. We have been promised more information over the next few days to enable us to plan how we will run the testing.

Yesterday came the announcement that there will be a staggered return to school in January. Examination years will return on 5th January 2021 – that is **Years 11, 12 and 13.**

Years 7, 8, 9, 10 will have on-line lessons from Tuesday 5th January until Friday 8th January. They will return to school on Monday 11th January 2021. Our understanding that this is to allow schools to set up mass testing during the first week of term.

If you are a Key worker or your child is considered vulnerable, your child will be able to come into school to access online lessons. If you fall into this category and wish for your child to come into school please complete this form by 3rd January 2021:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPage.aspx?fragment=FormId%3DpHPvZM7DxkCu2EYYyLkV5_I0LK3Jh4ROpeTknAMBAMdUMEEExNzNMUzBSQkM0TENOVjBWRDVZOVY5Ny4u%26Token%3D073e2512fb5f4b209c53d90d43a819d3

Key workers are those deemed to provide an essential service to the community such as:

- Health and Social Care
- Education and childcare
- Key public services
- Local and national government
- Food and necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport
- Utilities, communications and financial services

Vulnerable children include those with an EHCP or an allocated Social Worker.

As you will be aware from last weeks update, we will be monitoring positive cases over the next few days, the Government have amended the date to 23rd December, there are details below about this process.

Finally, and most importantly we would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to everyone returning safely in January.

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Reporting of positive cases during Christmas break

We will continue to monitor any positive cases after the end of term up to December 23rd. If we are alerted to any positive cases, we will carry out our normal track and trace process with HCC Public Health and notify close contacts who need to self-isolate.

During the holiday period if your child is tested positive for COVID-19 you should contact communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk – **this will be monitored until Christmas Eve as after this point your child shouldn't be a close contact of anyone at the school. If your child tests positive after the 24th December, please do still notify the school so that we can communicate with you on Monday 4th January 2021.**

Remember as soon as your child or any member of your household develops symptoms, they must start self-isolating immediately and book a test regardless of it being Christmas.

Main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- *a high temperature*
- *a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours*
- *a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal*

If you're not sure whether symptoms suggest that they have COVID-19 or an everyday cough or cold, you can consult this online NHS symptom checker: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

If you or your family are affected by COVID-19 and need support locally with things like shopping, getting medication or financial advice, visit: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Hertfordshire County Council has asked us to share the following important information with you following a significant increase in coronavirus infections amongst 12-16 year olds:

Dear parent/carers

Thank you for everything you and your family are doing to play your part in the fight against coronavirus. Our schools and other education settings have worked extremely hard this term to help keep everyone safe. However, as we move into the Christmas holidays, it is of utmost importance that we continue to stay safe.

We have seen a significant increase in the number of coronavirus infections in 12-16 year olds and would therefore urge you to have a conversation with your child to make sure they understand, and are following, the Government regulations to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The actions you and your family can take to play your part are:

- *Wash your hands regularly, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and warm water or use an antibacterial hand sanitiser if soap and water isn't available*
- *Stay at least 2 metres (or 1 metre with other measures, such as a face-covering) away from those not in your immediate household*
- *Wear a face-covering where required and when it is difficult to socially distance*
- *Self-isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms*

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- *Do not socialise indoors with anyone who isn't in your immediate household and only meet in groups of up to 6 people outdoors*

Hertfordshire will be moving into Tier 3 restrictions as of 00:01am on Saturday 19 December. Residents in these areas will need to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, Tier 3 restrictions: www.gov.uk/guidance/tier-3-very-high-alert

Please remember that while your child is in school, they are in a 'bubble', which is carefully managed by the school. However outside of school hours, they should continue to follow the most up to date Government guidelines, and we encourage you to explain this to your child.

If you choose to socialise in a bubble of up to three separate households during 23-27 December, which is the period the Government proposes to relax guidelines, please enjoy this time but please also remember to do so safely by continuing to follow good hand hygiene and socially distance where possible. Coronavirus is known to linger in enclosed spaces, so keeping windows open can also reduce risk.

We wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Hertfordshire County Council



Christmas Jumper Day-11th December

We are delighted to say we raised just over £300 last week for Save the Children.

Free School Meals

The Free School vouchers have all been distributed now and Hertfordshire County Council have created an enquiry form which families can use if they have any questions about the voucher scheme or accessing their vouchers once term has ended.

<https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/mealvouchers/>

You can also email HCC for further support: EducationTeam@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Families can make a new application and find more information, including a more accessible version of the user guidance for those with additional needs and details of how to request the information in alternative formats at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

Families who applied for free school meals after 14 December will receive their vouchers directly from Family Food Trust.

Families who do not qualify for free school meals but are worried about their finances or having enough food this winter can contact HertsHelp, email info@hertshelp.net, call 0300 123 4044 or visit www.hertshelp.net

REMINDER: COVID-19 Webpage

If you have any queries about COVID-19 and Barnwell School, please visit our designated COVID-19 webpage. This page has information regarding our COVID-19 procedures as well as our [school](#)

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[contingency plans](#), information guides and all previous parent/carer communication.
<https://www.barnwellschool.co.uk/covid-19-info-2/>

Reminder: Barnwell Community Clothing and Food Bank

In these unprecedented times if you feel you could do with some support in the form of a contribution from our Community clothing and food bank then please do not hesitate to email us in confidence at communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk.

REMINDER: Communications

Could we please remind parents and carers that due to the current structure of the school day and increased duties, on occasion, staff will not be able to return communication within the school day. A reminder of the school communication protocols set up last year can be found by clicking [this link](#).

If you would like clarification regarding any school matters, please do not hesitate to get in contact via communication@barnwell.herts.sch.uk

Thank you once again for your support and have a lovely weekend.

Mr Fitzpatrick
Executive Headteacher

Mr Roberts
Head of School