



COVID Update - Tuesday, 10th November

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

This email is to keep you informed about COVID safety matters. On Monday a student notified me that they had received a positive COVID test result. By following our tracing measures, which involve working with the student, talking with their teachers and checking seating plans, we immediately identified 21 proximity contacts and instructed those students to isolate. In this we have followed the Government's guidance and our risk assessment in identifying people who have been within 1 metre for any length of time or within 2 metre for 15 minutes or more. We have shared the details about the confirmed case and actions taken with the local health protection team who remain satisfied with the measures we have in place and the actions taken in response to a confirmed case.

Since then we have been notified that approximately 40 other students have been advised to isolate by the NHS app. For the significant majority of these cases we can't identify any contact with the affected person. It does appear, however, that they have been taught in neighbouring room or been in the same room at a later stage in the day.

Last week a member of staff was advised by the NHS helpline that the app worked to a 10m span and over a 3 hour timeframe which, if true, suggests that those contacted may not have come into contact with the person who had tested positive. Consequently I have reported my concerns about the app to the health protection team who advise that other schools and colleges are reporting the same issues and that some had suggested that the app did not recognise when there was a wall or other partition between potential contacts. I would clearly hope that the app is accurate given the potential impact for our students and staff and the huge disruption to learning caused by having to isolate. They have told me that they will feedback to the relevant authorities.

It is important for me to stress that whatever concerns I may have about the accuracy of the app if any student receives a notification to isolate from the NHS they must do so.

I have also raised my concerns with our MP Robin Walker who has kindly agreed to bring them to the attention of Government ministers.

As ever I will continue to keep you informed about any developments.

Kind regards

Ed Senior
Principal