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A University of Kent Academies Trust School

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Dear Parent/Carers,

COVID-19 Information: Isolation of Year groups: Year 9, Year 12 and Year 13

I am writing to notify you that three students have informed the Trust that they have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 24 hours. On the 22nd of September (yesterday) we wrote to parents and carers of Sixth Form students to advise them that a student within that group had tested positive. The advice the Trust received from the Department for Education at that time was for students to continue to attend as normal. With a second and third case being made known to us today, the advice received from the Department for Education has changed and we are now making the decision to ask all students in Years 9, 12 and 13 to self-isolate for 14 days.

We are taking this action following direct guidance and instruction from the Department for Education. I would like to stress that these three cases are unrelated and have no direct connection to the academy environment.

Year 9, 12 and 13 students are expected back on **Tuesday 6th October**. These dates differ as the 14-day isolation period has been calculated based on the infected student's last date of contact within the academy.

Other members of your household can continue normal activities provided your child does not develop symptoms within the 14 day self-isolation period. **All other year groups are unaffected** due to the COVID-secure protocols in place within the Trust in which year groups are in safe 'bubbles', and if you have children in another year, a separate letter has been issued to outline the situation.

Please see the link to: Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

During this period, all students in Years 9, 12 and 13 will be expected to participate fully in online learning. Lessons will follow their normal daily timetable and will be conducted via the 'Zoom' video platform which is available for free download at <https://zoom.us/>. Zoom can be used on computers, ipads/tablets and smartphones.

- Teachers will send students a weblink which will enable them join the lesson at the designated start time, according to their timetable
- Teachers will also send out an email which will contain all resources and activities for that session
- Attendance registers will be taken as normal and subject leaders and members of the school's senior leadership will be conducting 'drop ins' to these sessions to monitor participation
- In the case of a student who has not enrolled on the UKAT iPad scheme, the Trust have been provided with a limited bank of loan devices and these will be allocated using the following criteria:
 - Priority year group
 - Safeguarding/LAC/disadvantaged/Vulnerable
 - Individual circumstances
 - Where devices are awaiting repair/replacement

Please contact Chatham Grammar reception to apply for this support

I would remind all parents and carers that this is a critical time for our students and would ask for your full support in ensuring there is minimal disruption to learning during this period.

This action has not been taken lightly and the Trust has followed all of the Department for Education's advice and procedures closely in reaching this decision. I appreciate that this will create challenges for families as well as anxiety, but we have acted in-line with the directives we have been given. I have included below some further government information for reference.

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they 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'.

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 can, 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

Please see the link to the PHE 'Stay at Home' Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, 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/>

Yours Sincerely



Wendy Walters
Principal