

24 September 2020

Dear Parent/ Carers

Important, please read fully: Confirmed cases of Covid-19 within same household and additional information for parents/ carers/ students

I have been advised today that two students who attend SGHS in Y12 and Y13 and who are members of the same household have tested positive for Covid-19. A third member of the family also tested positive, but they did not attend SGHS in the period Public Health England consider to be a possible transmission window.

I know many parents and students may find this worrying as it follows my previous communications in the last week. However, we have worked closely with Public Health England and they believe the cases are due to wider community transmission and not transmission within the school. We will continue to monitor any patterns of symptomatic students and positive cases closely. I would like to outline the actions we have taken and provide some further information to parents and students to help them understand the decision making process if the school is notified of a positive case. I would also like to take this opportunity to remind all members of our school community of some ways we must work together to keep our school open and safe for everyone.

With regards to today's reported case; students who have been identified as being in direct prolonged contact or close proximity contact with the confirmed case will have received a separate letter and will be staying at home for the period advised by Public Health England.

For all other students the school remains open as normal and your child should continue to attend if they remain well.

What happens when the school is notified of a positive case?

As soon as the school is notified of a positive case, either by a parent or Track and Trace, the Headteacher, or Designated Senior Lead in his absence, contacts the Department for Education Public Health advice line, North Yorkshire County Council and NSAT who, alongside the school, work together to rapidly gather key information.

This will include identifying the period in which an individual could potentially be a transmission risk. Then identifying any close proximity or prolonged contacts the person has had, in lessons, during social time, on any transport to school or any close contacts outside of school with any members of SGHS community during this time. They will also consider the length of time the individual was in wider contact with others, for example a single option lesson in a day compared to being in the same core teaching group for all their lessons during a day. They will also consider any mitigating factors, for example transitory contact in a corridor wearing a face mask compared to a closer face to face conversation.



Public Health England/ Health Protection Team then agree the actions to be taken through discussion with the school/ Trust. This does mean that depending on the individual circumstances the actions may be different for different cases. For example, in years 7-9 the students spend almost all their teaching time within one class group, so it is likely the advice would be for that class group to self-isolate. However, for a sixth form class who may spend only one lesson together it may be just those sat closer to the individual who are required to self-isolate.

The school will then contact any students and their parents/ carers to inform them of the need to self-isolate.

Public Health England also review with the school the current actions the school has in place to minimise any risks associated with Covid-19 and recommend any alterations that should be made to the school risk assessment. To date they have identified the school is taking all the precautions necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff on site and have only recommended continuing to remind students and parents of the symptoms of Covid-19 and the importance of hand-washing/ sanitising, social distancing and self-isolation protocols.

When should I inform the school if my child has any of the Covid-19 symptoms?

Further guidance is given at the end of this letter about what to do if your child has any of the three key Covid-19 symptoms. As well as all members of the household self-isolating, if any member of the household has symptoms they should get a test as soon as possible. Tests can be booked through:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

We would also ask that you inform the school as soon as possible via the absence e-mail (absence@sghs.org.uk) informing us of your child's symptoms. **It is particularly important that if you receive notification of a positive test result this is reported, immediately, to the school via the absence e-mail as we do check this intermittently over the weekend and early each morning.**

If we are self-isolating due to a household member being symptomatic, we have a positive test within the household or we have been asked to self-isolate by the school or track and trace when can my child return to school?

- If you your child has been asked to self-isolate by the school (or by NHS Track and Trace) the letter you will receive will tell you the date at which they can stop self-isolating and return to school. This will be 14 days after the potential contact. Other household members do not need to self-isolate unless they have been advised to and this includes siblings in other year groups. The letter also provides further guidance on this. *Please note: if you have a test during the period and it comes back negative you must still isolate until the date on the letter.*
- If you are self-isolating because a member of your household has symptoms of Covid-19 you should self-isolate until that person receives their test result. If their test result is negative, you can return to school (providing you do not have symptoms). If it is positive or the person is not able to get a test you will need to self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of their symptoms and you can then return to school (providing you do not have symptoms).

- If you are self-isolating because there has been a positive case in your household you must isolate for 14 days from the onset of symptoms of the household member, or 14 days from the date the test was done if they were asymptomatic.
- For an individual who has tested positive they must self-isolate for at least 10 days. They can return to school after this period, providing they have not had a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees) for at least 48 hours.

What is the school doing to help reduce the possibility of Covid-19 transmission?

In my previous communications I have given detailed information about the steps we have taken to help ensure our school remains safe. This includes all the arrangements for entry, exit and movement around the school, limiting the mixing of students through the class and year group bubbles, enhanced cleaning including regular anti-viral fogging alongside the procedure of double-disinfecting of desks/ chairs.

This information, alongside a copy of our school risk assessment, can be found on the 'coronavirus update' section of our website.

Each week our Senior Leadership Team reviews our procedures and our risk assessments. The Local Governing Body and Trust also regularly scrutinise the risk assessment and its application day to day in the school.

We are also giving regular reminders to students around face coverings, social distancing and the importance of us all working together to keep our school safe.

What can I do as a parent to help keep the school safe?

Parents/ carers have a key role to play in this too. Firstly, you can help reinforce the key messages around hand washing/ sanitising, social distancing and following expectations both in and out of school. In particular, if your child travels on public/ school transport remind them (as we do every day) about wearing a face covering (unless they are exempt).

It is also important that parents/ carers play their part in helping reduce the chances of Covid-19 coming into school by ensuring every member of their household follows the government guidelines at all times.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. I am sure if all members of our school community, both at school and at home, work together to follow the guidance we can ensure our school remains open and safe for everyone.

Many thanks



Mr Mark Turner
Head of Academy

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 or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> 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/> .