



THOMAS MILLS HIGH SCHOOL

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Dear Parents

10th November 2020

Headteacher's Update 2020/2021 – Letter 8 (of 8)

I know that the school community have appreciated these update letters that have been issued from time to time. There is always a lot for us all to consider!

Contact with the Department for Education Helpline

Although there is no requirement from the Department for Education or the Health Authorities, I thought you would appreciate knowing from me, rather than the 'grapevine,' that I had reason to speak to the designated helpline following notification of a single positive case regarding a pupil. As you will understand the details are confidential.

In summary, because the individual was not in an educational setting two days before symptoms and the taking of a test, no further action is required by the school. Fortunately, it seems that everyone has taken the right actions and I am sure you will share my good wishes to the family and hope for a good recovery.

This is not the first time I have sought advice from the helpline, and we have managed a number of individual cases now. For example, where someone has come into close contact with an individual who tested positive or relatives with symptoms or a confirmed diagnosis.

Coronavirus Symptoms

This is a timely reminder that a pupil must self-isolate and arrange a test if they have any of these three symptoms:

- **A high temperature** – any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest
- **A new continuous cough** – coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- **A loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste** – a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal

The NHS tell us that a test is not needed if the symptoms are a runny nose, sneezing or feeling unwell unless they have any of the Coronavirus symptoms

Working with Health Protection Teams

I hope that this letter reassures you that the school will work closely with the appropriate authorities and are alert to this possibility over weekends and holidays too. Essentially, as in the case referred to above, the school follows their lead. The Health Protection Team have template letters ready which can be sent to parents and staff.



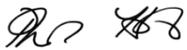
Update on Changes

It's probably too early to provide a detailed update. However, it is already clear that some of the new measures such as the one-way system, have significantly reduced congestion at lesson changeover. The majority of pupils were outside yesterday lunchtime and it was good to see them socialising. (I have requested good weather for the remainder of this term!)

I thought that the news updates on vaccinations were very encouraging and provides hope that we are genuinely moving through this pandemic. We all still need to keep going and recent experiences remind us about the importance of those key messages about staying alert, washing hands, covering face, and maintaining space.

With good wishes.

Yours sincerely



P J Hurst
Headteacher