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Richard Brand: Headteacher

12th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Coronavirus Update and Further Precautions

We are writing to you in response to a slow, but steady, increase in Covid-19 cases that we are seeing across all year groups at the school. Cases remained very low for the first four to five weeks of term but, somewhat inevitably, have begun to creep up in recent days.

Attendance to schools nationally dropped significantly last week to just below 90%, and it was reported that nationally one in fifteen secondary aged students had Covid-19. Thankfully, cases at The Dean Academy are far, far lower than this, but we have certainly seen an increase and based on this, we want to share some important information with you:

1) Be aware of Positive Lateral Flow Tests followed by a negative PCR test

We have been made aware that Public Health SW are investigating accounts that large numbers of people in Bristol, Bath and across the SW have reportedly tested positive after taking a Lateral Flow test but have then gone on to test negative on a PCR. This combination should be very, very rare (the PCR is meant to override a LF) but is something we are seeing happen frequently in our setting currently. This story was covered by the BBC this week and you can read more [here](#).

We have been advised by Public Health of the following:

"We are aware of a potential issue with positive lateral flow test results followed by negative PCR test results. This is being looked into nationally. Our advice is that if a pupil or staff member has been in close contact with a positive case, are displaying Covid symptoms and have tested positive on an LFT (but subsequently test negative on a PCR) they are treated as covid positive, and we recommend they isolate for 10 days"

Please contact us if you want to discuss this further or have any queries regarding this new guidance.

2) Further Precautions in School

In response to this slow, but steady, increase in cases and in line with guidance and according to our Coronavirus Management Plan ([here](#) on our website), we need to **reinstate some precautions** in order to ensure that we **minimise disruption** and to **reduce the transmission of the virus**.



From immediate effect, the following measures will be re-introduced:

- **Face coverings will be worn by all students and staff in indoor communal areas** (not in lessons themselves) unless exempt. Face coverings will be worn in lessons for Year 7 only due to high case levels, unless exempt
- We will make **Lateral Flow tests available** to test in school for any student who require them twice weekly
- Students will have a **designated zone at break and lunch** and we advise against mixing with other year groups
- We will not run any face-to-face assemblies or mass gatherings

We very much hope by taking these measures now we can slow the spread of the virus and avoid any further, more wide reaching, restrictions over the coming weeks and months.

Students will be informed of these newly introduced measures in a remote whole school assembly on Tuesday morning.

Thank you all for your understanding as we work to keep our school community as safe as possible. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of the information in this letter please get in contact via info@thedeanacademy.org and a member of Senior Staff will get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Richard Brand
Headteacher

RIB/TW - Covid-update-121021