



24 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

General update – Covid-19, NHS contact tracing app

I hope your week is going well. We have been back almost four weeks and it feels like the world has changed quite a bit in that short time.

Since the Prime Minister announced new restrictions earlier in the week I have been asked what this means for schools. In short, we carry on as normal until told otherwise. None of the restrictions being implemented impact on educational settings at this time. I will write again if this changes.

The infection rate in North Kesteven has continued to drop, which is encouraging. When I last wrote to you, there were 21 cases per 100,000 people which was a drop from a few days before. It now stands at 15 cases. The national average is 19. This is welcome news as we approach the cooler weather.

You may have seen that the new NHS contact tracing app is available to download. This is available from Apple App Store and Google Play Store. However, it is not recommended for anyone under the age of 16. With this in mind, we recognise that you may wish for your child to download the app even if they are not eligible. If they do, we ask that they respect our usual rules around use of mobile phones on the Academy site as these rules have not changed. However, should a student receive a notification from the app whilst in school, we would want them to report it to a member of staff as soon as possible and definitely before leaving the premises that day.

It is important to bear in mind a few issues with the app:

1. If you or your child received a notification, it does not mean that they have been next to someone with Covid-19 that day. Notifications will refer to a time period one or two days prior to the notification being received.
2. Some settings are expected to ask the NHS for NHS QR codes so that people can 'check in' each day. This is not expected of schools and so we will not be utilising this at the Academy.
3. If a staff member or a student leaves their phone unattended for any period of time they should pause the app to avoid inappropriate location tracking in proximity to the phone.
4. The app is open to abuse. Intentional misuse of the app (such as logging symptoms they do not have in order to receive a recommendation to go home and self-isolate) or checking the app during lessons are not helpful or acceptable. I ask for your support in ensuring that this does not happen in the Academy. If someone were to deliberately misuse the app to be sent home it would cause me hours of work I cannot afford to waste time on. Thank you.

On the subject of wasting time, yet again, Facebook is rearing its head again. This is incredibly unhelpful. For the record, we do not have 3 positive cases in the Academy. I spoke, yet again, with Public Health England this morning about this matter.

To be accurate, as our Year 8 bubble returned today, we have no active cases. There has also been some concern about a perceived lack of consistency about how many days I have sent people home for. Firstly, our bubbles are so well set up that, unlike other schools, we do not necessarily need to send home a whole year group. In relation to the Year 8 case recently, we have 250 in the year group and 72 were sent home. Secondly, the period of isolation students can be sent home for is dependent on when they last had contact with any positive case. It is not automatically 14 days away from school if the positive case has not been in for a period of time.

Once again, if any parents have any concerns at all, please contact us at the Academy using the email address COVID@srpa.co.uk. This will make it directly to me where I will be able to help and will do my best to prioritise your concern.

The next few weeks will hold many challenges and unforeseeable obstacles. As Mahatma Gandhi once said "The future depends on what you do today." Our practice has been tested lately and has not been found wanting. We remain vigilant and flexible to improve our arrangements but, for now, we are in a positive space. I will look to keep it that way.

Enjoy the rest of the week and the weekend when it finally arrives.

I will write again soon.

Yours faithfully



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