



COVID-19 UPDATE 4

7th December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you safe and well. As we are nearing the end of what has been, for everyone, a long and challenging term, I am proud of the way in which our students have adapted to the changes to the school environment and engaged with their learning.

Despite the concerns about the impact of COVID-19, attendance has remained very strong: for week ending 27th November, year to date whole school attendance stood at 95.4%, only slightly down on the same point last year, and significantly above the national average for state-funded secondary schools which, at 19th November, stood at 78%. This is, in large part due to South Worcestershire having relatively low rates of confirmed cases, but must also reflect the way in which the vast majority of students and their families have engaged with following government and public health guidance in relation to social distancing and minimising risk. Thank you for your support with this.

I am writing to share with you some guidance issued to schools on 3rd December 2020 by Worcestershire Children First (WCF) and the local public health team in relation to positive COVID-19 cases identified in the days at the end of, or immediately after, the end of term. Please also see on the website, a letter from Dr Catherine Driscoll, Worcestershire's Director of Children's Services. I would also like to update you on the latest information we have received in relation to next summer's GCSE and A Level examinations.

COVID Reporting: Christmas and New Year Holiday 2020

'The steps outlined below from Public Health and WCF provide information for schools in terms of requirements of reporting positive COVID 19 cases to the Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT) during the Christmas holiday period.'

The actions that need to be taken are set out with key dates, and apply to staff, parents and pupils. These can be used to support planning for the end of term, the start of the holiday period and the new term.' (NB: The dates shown below apply to Prince Henry's, based upon students' last day in school being Thursday 17th December.)

'Schools & FE Colleges

- 1. 'Pupils who have COVID-19 symptoms starting on 18th or 19th December will need to inform their school immediately if they have a subsequent positive test date up to and including 24th December 2020. This will also apply if an asymptomatic person has a positive test on 18th or 19th December. As always, if a pupil or a member of their household develops symptoms of COVID, they should arrange a test as soon as possible and notify the school immediately if the result is positive.' If you do need to report a positive test result, this should be done via enquiries@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk.**
- 2. 'Pupils/students and staff who develop COVID-19 symptoms and test positive on or after 00.01hrs on Sunday 20th December will not need to inform the school but will be required to self-isolate for 10 days and their close contacts will be identified through the national Contact Tracing Service (CTS). There will be no action for the school.'**
- 3. 'Pupils/students and staff who will need to continue their self-isolation into the new term should inform the school of their absence in the usual way.'**

Victoria Avenue, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 4QH

t: 01386 765588 • f: 01386 40760 • e: enquiries@princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk • www.princehenrys.worcs.sch.uk

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Working in collaboration with Bredon Hill and St Ewain's Middle Schools

4. **'Parents should be reminded that under no circumstances should any pupil/student or staff member return to school if they are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms (however minor) or are unwell in any other way. They should arrange for a test and inform the school. '**

Please note that during the holidays, if your child is identified as a close contact of somebody who has tested positive and was in school on or before Thursday 17th December, you will receive the following text message from us up to and including 24th December. There will be no other correspondence, as school will be closed during the holidays.

"Your child has been identified as a positive contact for Covid 19 and must self-isolate for 10 days from now."

Public Exams Summer 2021 Update

We have now received confirmation of the dates for GCSE and A Level examinations next summer.

- GCSE exams will commence on 26th May 2021 and run through until 2nd July
- A Level exams will commence on 27th May 2021, ending on 28th June.
- Exam schedules have been posted in the [Examinations area of the school website](#).

On 3rd December, Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education announced further information relating to the measures that will be introduced to make next summer's exams as fair as possible in light of the disruption caused by COVID-19, and the following information was issued to schools by the DfE:

'Building on the 3 week delay to exams to free up extra teaching time announced in October, the new measures include:

- *more generous grading than usual, in line with national outcomes from 2020, so students this year are not disadvantaged*
- *students receiving advance notice of some topic areas covered in GCSE, AS and A levels to focus revision*
- *exam aids, for example formula sheets, provided in some exams giving students more confidence and reducing the amount of information they need to memorise*
- *a new expert group to look at differential learning and monitor the variation in the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak on students across the country*

The government will set out further detail on this process, and on adaptations to exams, in the new year.

[The DfE has] published [guidance to support the summer 2021 exams](#) and [accountabilities](#) to provide further clarity for schools, colleges, parents and pupils. '

In a separate update, the DfE have also advised us of the following:

'If a student missed all GCSE or A Level assessments in a subject due to sickness related to COVID-19, or they need to self-isolate and are unable to access the special consideration process, they will be eligible to sit a single contingency paper. This will take place between 28 June to 16 July 2021 and timetabled to allow at least a 10-day gap after each subject's final paper in the main series. Work has started on writing this timetable.' If you are currently planning a holiday for after the exam period, you may wish to bear these contingency dates in mind.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all your support during 2020. These have been truly extraordinary and difficult times, and I am grateful to the whole Prince Henry's community - students, parents, staff and governors for the way in which they have worked together, making the best of a very challenging situation, to ensure that our students have been able to continue their learning.

May I wish you and your family all the very best for what will be a very different Christmas for us all.

Please stay safe and well, and best wishes for 2021

Yours sincerely



Dr A Evans
Headteacher