24th September 2021

ARDEN

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Dear Parents/Guardians

Covid-19 Update

Over the last two weeks we have been made aware that several students, in particular in Years 7 and 9, have tested positive for COVID 19.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and are working closely with public health advisers. This letter is to inform you of the current situation and provide advice on how to support your child. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. There are a number of management actions that are already in place and reminders that we will be stressing to students this week to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in school:

- **Hand Hygiene** – ensuring students are sanitising hands on entry and exit to each room.
- **Respiratory hygiene** – reminding students of good respiratory hygiene, i.e. coughing and sneezing into the crook of their elbow and binning any used tissues immediately in a lidded bin.
- **Ventilation –** ensuring that all doors and windows are open to maintain a constant flow of fresh air.
- **One Way System –** ensuring that students are all following the one-way system to reduce face to face contact.
- **Social Zones** – reminding students that they need to be in their designated zones at break and lunch to try to limit any cross year group contamination.
- **Face Coverings** – reminding students that wearing of face coverings is permitted and is an additional preventative measure that they can take to try and limit their risk of infection.

In addition we will not be holding live assemblies next week to further reduce large groups gathering and will revert to video assemblies for the next week or two while we monitor the situation.

Additional actions that may be suggested by Public Health may include the possibility of reintroducing face coverings in communal areas and during transitions and further reducing mixing in school. We will inform you of these possible measures if needed as we continue to monitor the situation. We are extremely mindful of the negative impact of missing education has on children and young people, therefore, restricting attendance at school will only be considered as an absolute last resort.

The school remains open and providing your child remains well they can continue to attend school as normal.

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What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19
If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 (new, continuous cough, high temperature, loss/change in taste/smell), they 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.
If the person with symptoms receives a positive test result, all household members who are fully vaccinated (had their second vaccine more than 14 days ago) or are aged below 18 years 6 months, do not need to isolate but should access a free PCR test. Adults who are not fully vaccinated need to isolate from 10 days from the case's first symptoms (or test date if they had no symptoms). Full guidance can be found 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

Contact tracing
Schools/settings are no longer required to trace close contacts of cases and, if your child tests positive for COVID-19, the local contact tracing team will be in touch to identify close contacts. Contact tracers will ask about symptoms, test date and will help you to identify anyone they have been in close contact with during their infectious period. We appreciate you may not be able to identify all of those who have been close contact with your child, however, we will work with you to identify as many as possible.
If your child is identified as a close contact, they will be contacted and advised to access a free PCR test (they do not need to isolate whilst waiting for the result).

How you can help
Symptoms - It is also extremely important that all parents/guardians are vigilant in spotting symptoms in their child(ren) and do not send them to their school/setting if they have COVID-19 symptoms. During this period when there are COVID-19 cases in schools, if you are in any doubt about your child's symptoms, please take them for a PCR test.

Asymptomatic COVID-19 testing is extremely important in reducing the risk of the virus spreading and we encourage you to support your child in taking their tests at least twice per week and reporting a positive result to us by email – office@arden.solihull.sch.uk

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Warwood
Associate Headteacher