

Advice to All Parents - warn and inform

Dear Parents,

There has been a rise in confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the college setting over the weekend.

We appreciate that you may find this concerning so we are continuing to monitor the situation and are providing the following advice. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

What are we already doing?

Students and staff who have tested positive are isolating. The children/staff who are identified as contacts of the confirmed cases will have guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

Outbreak control measures are also in place within the college and being kept under review. We have reintroduced the wearing of masks in classrooms until further notice for Years 7-11 inclusive. Also, we have suspended assemblies. All other outbreak control measures were already in-place before this weekend's rise in numbers, as the college has consistently erred on the side of caution.

If your child is well

The college remains open. If your child remains well, they can continue to attend school as normal. We will keep this under review.

In addition to daily LFD testing for close contacts, we expect HCC students (household members aged 11 and over, that do not attend our college are also encouraged) to **continue with twice weekly LFD testing** (Sunday & Wednesday evenings) to help identify cases promptly.

If you think your child is a close contact but has not been contacted directly by NHS Test and Trace, then we would advise they undertake daily LFD tests for a period of 7 days. This advice applies to children aged 5 and over. Whilst daily testing for 7 days is your choice, it is strongly encouraged as it helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community. Additional LFD tests are available from college on request (or via community testing sites, local pharmacies or you can order [online](#) for home delivery). Children aged under 5 who are close contacts are not required to isolate and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts.

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19

If your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should get a PCR test (<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or call 119) and remain at home at least

until the result is known and they are fever free (without medication) for at least 24 hours.

- If negative, the child can end self-isolation and return to college once well;
- If positive, the child should isolate as a positive case (see below)

People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until they are well (48 hours fever free) and *either*:

- a) 10 full days have passed, *or*
- b) They have produced two negative LFD tests on consecutive days, with the first taken no earlier than day 5.

Note: Lingering coughs and changes to smell/taste are *not* a sign of ongoing infectiousness, so children can return to school if they have ended their self-isolation period (see above).

If your child does not have symptoms, count the day they took the test as day 0. If they subsequently develop symptoms, they will need to restart their isolation period using the day symptoms developed as day 0.

You can seek advice on COVID-19 symptoms from the [nhs.uk website](https://www.nhs.uk). If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111

Instructions for people who live in the same household as someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is symptomatic and awaiting a test result

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. If you are not legally required to self-isolate, you will be provided with advice on testing, **advised to take extra caution**, and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Those who are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

You are *not* required to self-isolate [if any of the following apply](#):

- You are fully vaccinated
- You are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- You have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- You are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Fully vaccinated means that you have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since you received the recommended doses of that vaccine (note this is currently under review and may be updated to include a booster dose in due course).

In line with national guidance for households with Covid-19 infection, household and other close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should

undertake **daily LFD testing for a period of 7 days** or for 10 days from their last contact with the positive case (whichever is first). This is recommended for all close contacts aged 5 and over who are not required to isolate. If not already provided, LFD tests are available via community testing sites, local pharmacies or you can order [online](#) for home delivery.

Children aged under 5 who are close contacts are not required to isolate and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts. If a child under the age of 5 lives with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 they will be advised to avoid contact with those at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 and to take a one-off PCR test as soon as possible.

You are required to self-isolate if you're aged over 18 years and 6 months and [if any of the following apply](#):

- You have received only one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine
- You have not received any dose of the COVID-19 vaccination
- You are not otherwise exempt

Household members who need to self-isolate as close contacts should not go to work, school or public areas, and exercise should be taken within the home. You should ask friends or family if you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online. Please read [the stay at home guidance](#) which provides information on this.

Household members staying at home for 10 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

You could be fined if you do not self-isolate following a notification by NHS Test and Trace. You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the [NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme](#) if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate, or you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate. To access the payment, eligible people will still be asked to take a confirmatory PCR if they receive a positive LFD result.

How to reduce spread of COVID-19 as a household contact who is not required to self-isolate

Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be infected with COVID-19 and pass it on to others. If you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 but you are not required to self-isolate, you can help protect others by following the [guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#).

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community:

- Test daily using LFDs
- Limit close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces (when not in college)
- Wear a face covering for those aged 11 and over in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces and when you are in close contact with other people

- Limit contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with Covid-19
- Follow the guidance on [how to stay safe and help prevent the spread - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/how-to-stay-safe-and-help-prevent-the-spread-of-covid-19)

You should follow this advice for at least 10 days.

If you are a health or social care worker or student undertaking a work placement who has been identified as a household contact and are exempt from self-isolation, there is [additional guidance](#) available that you should follow to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in these settings.

If you develop symptoms at any time, even if these are mild, self-isolate immediately, [arrange to have a COVID-19 PCR test](#) and follow the [guidance for people with COVID-19 symptoms](#).

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- Get vaccinated – everyone aged 12 and over can book COVID-19 vaccination appointments now
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- Open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- Wear a face covering if aged 11 and over when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- Participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: <https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Yours sincerely

Glenn Smith
Principal