



Horsforth School

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Headteacher: Dr P C Bell

Our Ref: PCB/TRH

23rd October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you, your family and friends are safe and well.

As the half term draws to a close and whilst we have had confirmed cases in school it's been a calm and positive return. Our students have been wonderful at meeting expectations in school and the majority of staff have said that students have been keen to learn, dedicated and happy to be back.

Year 11 sat their mock exams last week and despite being in the middle of a global pandemic, we had 99% attendance to these exams and the students were an absolute credit to the school and their parents. They were punctual, focused, positive and respectful and the external invigilators commented on what a delightful group of students they were.

Remote learning

We have been focussing on how we can continue to support learning if students are self-isolating; if a bubble is sent home or if we are directed to close partially or fully. All of these situations present their challenges but we are confident that we are getting better every day.

If the teacher is well and available then we aim to have a live element to every lesson. This is only possible if the entire class or bubble is learning remotely as they also have to teach the lesson in school. This could be live delivery via Google Meet, a Q&A session or dial in support and feedback. This will always be through the virtual Google Classroom where the joining link, activities and resources will be posted.

For students self-isolating or where we have to send students home they check the Google Classroom first and then they can go to our remote learning site (a link is on the top bar of our school website): <https://sites.google.com/horsforthschool.org/home-learning-portal/home>

This uses the Oak National Academy resources (which I used extensively during lockdown to home educate my children), or similar high quality subject based resources, but in the sequence and order that we follow in school. This means students can start learning immediately on the topics and areas that we are covering in school so they can simply 'slot back in' when they return from isolation. Please bear with us as not all subjects are complete but I would like to publicly thank Dr Saville for his hard work on this.

The Year 12 bubble has been self-isolating for the last 10 days and remote learning has been incredibly successful. Attendance to the remote learning sessions has been exemplary and the students have been

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focused and engaged. Staff have thoroughly enjoyed teaching them and trying out new apps and remote learning tools. We have invested in visualisers for all teachers so that they can mark and assess work in real time projected on the board or screen for all students to see.

We have had staff shortages as they have had to isolate due to testing positive, contact tracing or a family member with symptoms and this led us to have Year 11 at home for the last 2 days of term. This has allowed those teachers isolating to still teach remotely and we have used the opportunity to fine tune our remote learning. I look forward to seeing all the school back on November the 2nd (unless students are isolating or have shown symptoms).

If we ever have to do this again we will always balance how many students are currently isolating in each Year group, the teaching groups of the teachers isolating (as this dictates how many lessons need to be covered) and how badly affected the Year groups have been by isolation or provision during lockdown when selecting which Year group learns remotely.

Testing positive over half term

Please inform us over half term through the info@horsforthschool.org email if your child tests positive for COVID. We still need to contact trace students who were **in school within 48 hrs of showing symptoms**. Please include:

1. When their symptoms started.
2. When they had their test.
3. When you received their positive result.
4. The names of any social contacts they have had in school:
direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual without a mask

Return to school

We very much look forward to welcoming students back in November and hope everyone has a lovely break but please could I remind you to **not** send in any students if:

- They show any of these symptoms:
 - A new, persistent cough
 - Loss of taste or smell
 - A high temperature/fever
- Anyone else in the household or support bubble is showing symptoms
- Anyone else in the household or support bubble tests positive for COVID

I know it may feel a difficult end to the half term but we have, as a school, done remarkably well in comparison to many other schools and I am proud with how the students and staff have coped with the local and national situation. The school is still calm, purposeful, orderly and dare I say it, normal (the new normal that is). We remain, as a staff, honoured to serve Horsforth as a community and to play a part in ensuring our fantastic students are well prepared for a bright future.

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None of us know what the next half term will bring but if our students and staff bring the same positivity, work ethic and resilience then I cannot see it being anything other than a success.

Thank you, as always, for your kind words and support, I hope you have a wonderful week.

Yours faithfully

Dr P Bell
Headteacher

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