

23 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We had our first confirmed cases of Covid 19 among members of our school community this week. We took advice from the Department of Education and traced any staff or students who had been in 'close contact' with the infected individual. Those families were notified separately of the need for their child to self isolate for a period of 14 days. We had been very fortunate to reach the fifth week of term without a confirmed case of Covid 19 and I am grateful for the care taken by parents to communicate clearly with us about any illness, symptoms or family circumstances which may be relevant for us to know. This, along with our infection control measures in school, has really helped us to create a safe environment for students and staff. However, with cases rising, we want to be particularly vigilant and to ensure that everything is set up and ready in the event that we have to send more students home to self isolate for a period of time. The process would be as follows:

1. Information received about a confirmed case among the school community
2. School gather information about 'close contacts' of the affected individual, using the school timetable, seating plans and conversations with the affected individual.
3. School contact PHE/LHPT for advice and instruction
4. Contact made with parents of students who have been identified as 'close contacts' and a letter provided to explain arrangements for home education.
5. Letter sent to all parents to inform them of the positive case and any relevant actions taken. All students not identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal.

We want to ensure that there is no lost learning time for students so are asking families to take some time over half term to ensure that the following are in place at home:

- Your child has access to a computer, tablet, laptop or chromebook with internet connection.
- Your child knows how to log into the DPR and RM Unify and can access their school email account and homework.
- You also know how to access the DPR to check your child's schedule and completion of work. (You can download the app on your mobile phone).

If you are unable to tick any of the above boxes, please contact your child's Head of Year straightaway and we will be happy to support you to resolve any issues to ensure your child is set up for learning from home. This is critical so that your child can complete their homework, which is all set through the DPR, but will also be vital in the event that they need to self isolate for a period of time.

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Chair of Governors Wendy Mason



We have delivered tutorials to students through tutor time to make sure they are instructed on how to use the DPR. However, we want to ensure all parents are confident and familiar with the application and system for setting work. Please click the link below to access an instruction video via our website:

<https://haggerston.hackney.sch.uk/2020/09/30/dpr-assignments-guide-for-students-and-parents/>

This is one of the most important ways parents can support their child's education.

After half term, we are planning to implement some changes to the school timetable. Now it is clear that Covid measures are likely to be required for the remainder of the academic year, we feel it is right to make some adaptations to ensure that students' learning is not impacted by the infection control measures we have to take. For example, this will allow us to return to our normal arrangements for setting and remove the 'base groups' for Key Stage 3 which we implemented for the purpose of reducing movement. This is important as many students have different strengths and weaknesses across Maths, English and Science and should be grouped according to their ability in each subject discretely rather than for all three. When we introduced base groups, cases of Covid 19 were decreasing and we had hoped that adaptations to the timetable would be short term. However, now that is not the case, we need a model which is sustainable for the whole year and in line with our educational values and setting policy. The key changes are outlined below:

What is changing?	Why?	What does this mean for my child?
Increase the number of double lessons and move to a two week timetable	Double lessons significantly reduce movement of students around the site and therefore reduce the risk of students from different year group bubbles from mixing. The two week timetable allows for all subjects to fit into the timetable when put into bubbles. The change allows for normal groupings and rooming to resume whilst keeping infection risk low. Double lessons also allow for more extended learning to take place.	Your child will be given a new timetable on 16th November. They will have a tutor period to introduce the changes. Key stage 4 and 5 teachers will stay the same but some Key stage 3 teachers may change to make the timetable work. If you have a child in Key stage 3 (Years 7-9), they will return to normal tutor groups and to specific sets for English, Maths and Science. All other subjects will be mixed ability.
Year 9 will move to early lunch and Year 11 to late lunch	This is to make the timetable work better for Year 9.	Year 9 will have lunch in the canteen from 11.50-12.45 and Year 11 will have lunch from 12.45-1.40pm
DPR cycle 1 to be based on continuous	We need to maximise teaching time for students in Years 7-9 who are not facing	Students in Years 7-9 will be assessed through ongoing

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<p>assessment, not exams for Key stage 3</p>	<p>public examinations in the near future. This is to help catch up some missed learning from last year. Students will complete assessment tasks in lessons and teachers will assess their work but through continuous assessment rather than examinations. We feel this will reduce pressure on students in Years 7 to 9 and allow them more catch up time before they sit exams in the Spring Term.</p>	<p>classwork.</p> <p>Students in Years 10-13, who have public examinations in the near future, will still sit mock examinations as this provides important practice and a gauge of where students' knowledge gaps are.</p> <p>The Spring Term DPR cycle will happen as normal.</p>
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As we head into the break, I would like to pay public tribute to the staff who have worked so hard to help students settle into the 'new normal' of life under COVID restrictions. The new systems in school have added a whole level of complexity to what are already demanding jobs. I am grateful to the families who have contacted the school to express their gratitude for staff going above and beyond, but I know that what all the staff need most is a relaxing half term to recharge their batteries before we start up again in a week's time.

Finally, a reminder that tier 2 restrictions are now in place across London. This makes many of the normal festivities of Halloween and Bonfire Night impossible and unsafe. Please do ensure that your children are staying within guidance over the holiday for their own safety and that of the whole community. With infection rates rising across Hackney, this break could have a positive impact on transmission, if all members of the community comply fully with regulations.

Thank you for your support in this.

Yours faithfully



Ciara Emmerson  
Headteacher