30th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Many thanks for your understanding and support during the first few weeks of term as together we cope with usual demands of a ‘new’ way of living. I believe that your cooperation and sensible pre-emptive decisions to isolate when a family member shows Covid 19 symptom is one of the reasons that we are the only high school in Bolton that has not had to close our door to cohorts of students. Thank you for communicating so well with us.  We have also been taking the same precautious actions with staff members and although this has meant that we have had to cover an unusually high number of lessons and duties, it has allowed us to remain open with our children learning in a safe environment.

Understandably, we have had an extraordinary number of calls from concerned parents and carers worried about the safety of their child coming to school following information sent out last night regarding a confirmed positive coronavirus case of a staff member.  Some parents are asking if their child was in their class.  We can’t provide this information for reasons of GDPR and out of sensitivity to staff members. Normally we would call back all concerned parents and speak to them individually.  However, with reduced staff capacity, our priority is to look after your children in school and to keep them safe.   We have brought in some supply staff but we have tried to keep this to a minimum to reduce the chance of bringing in potential infection from different communities.  This means that in-house staff and senior leaders are under increased pressure covering lessons and keeping students safe.   Apologies for the fact that we can’t respond to every call in person.

According to the direction we have received from the Health Protection Team parent/carers need not worry about their contact with the teacher who has tested positive.  Our cautious action meant that the teacher did not have contact with any children within at least 48 hours of them developing symptoms.  The health protection guidance states:

**Proximity contact:**

Extended close contact of between 1 and 2 metres for more than 15 minutes, with a confirmed case.

**The infectious period is defined as:**

2 full days before the onset of symptoms (or the date of test if they don’t have symptoms) until 10 days after symptoms started (or the date of the test if they do not have symptoms)

Please can I reassure parents that no student has had proximity contact with the member of staff during the infectious period.  We are in constant communication with the local health protection team and follow the most up to date guidance based on the most recent medical and scientific evidence available.  Please also be assured that we will communicate everything that you need to know in a timely fashion to keep you up to speed.

Please take care and be safe.

God Bless!

*Tony McCabe*

*Headteacher*