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COVID Update: 19th October

Dear Parents / Carers,

I wanted to update you on various COVID related items.

Firstly, since I last updated you, I have met with the Local Authority and Public Health England and spoken with the DFE. We have also been visited as a routine visit by the Health and Safety Executive, who toured the school site and reviewed our Risk Assessments and procedures. All have agreed that the measures we have in place to limit the risk of COVID are appropriate and no further measures are required beyond the ones we are using. They have confirmed that there is not transmission across bubbles. There is a rising rate of COVID cases in our community and many of the cases in school are linked to cases outside of school. Although establishing exact transmission routes can be difficult.

As a precautionary measure, you will be aware that I have asked for the whole school to be professionally deep cleaned to eradicate the risk of COVID existing on surfaces in the building. This has been completed successfully over the weekend.

In terms of cases and students self-isolating, I am glad to say our Year 10 students can return to school from Wednesday 21st October. We have had some additional cases related to the groups that are already self-isolating in Years 7 -9 and had to additionally ask the newly established close contacts to self-isolate. Remote Learning has been provided and parents have been able to access Free School Meal vouchers where they are entitled to. All the parents have been contacted and where the students are in school, we ensure they self-isolate until they are able to leave. I am aware that some schools have asked entire years to go home, and then invite students back in the next day. As we are very swiftly able to identify close contacts and secure cleaning on the same day this is not required. For example, today we were informed of a Year 11 positive case and were able to identify close contacts within 30 minutes ensuring that those students could safely be off site rapidly, rather than send home 216 students, the vast majority of whom did not come into contact with the individual involved.

Whilst all the activity around COVID is happening we still must get on with the day to day of running the school, looking after our students, and keeping them generally safe, happy, and learning well. We are introducing lots of new systems, such as various styles of Remote Learning that have never been tried before, so please bear with us as we improve those systems as rapidly as we can. Staff are giving everything they have got to run both real world classrooms and virtual ones as well as supporting students to make sense of the world around them. That is all staff not just our teachers. As we approach the end of term I would ask that you reinforce the key messages that we have been sending out from school: If you are unwell, don't come into school; when you do, keep your distance and sanitise your hands often.

Best wishes



Nick Lewis
Principal

An International Academy

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