

22nd November 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, we would like to thank you all for your on-going support at this particularly challenging time. This week we have experienced a steady increase in the number of cases both in the local area and at The Brittons Academy. Several other local schools have taken the decision to close bubbles or, in some cases, whole schools because the number of positive cases in Havering is rising quickly. As a result of this week's positive cases, we have a number of students and staff who are self-isolating due to being identified as being in close contact with someone who has tested positive. In addition to this, we have a number of students who are still awaiting test results.

In order to protect our students, staff and local community, I have made the difficult decision to close the whole school on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th November. This will allow our specialist cleaning team to completely deep clean the whole school site. Following this, all students in year 7, year 8 and year 9 will remain at home for the rest of the week and return on Monday 30th November. Students in year 10 and year 11 will return to school on Wednesday 25th November and will have lessons as normal with added COVID security measures.

This is not a decision we have taken lightly, and we have consulted with Public Health England, Havering Local Authority and the Empower Learning Trust before doing so. All stakeholders are in full agreement that this is the best course of action to minimise any further risk to the students, their families and our staff at this time. We hope you will appreciate that these precautions are necessary to allow us time to deep clean and to minimise contact between both students and staff.

Those in year 7, year 8 and year 9 who are entitled to Free School Meals during this period will be able to access a food parcel to cover the week that they have been asked to stay at home. Please contact Ms. Pearson via pearsons@brittons.havering.sch.uk to arrange collection from school, if this is something you would like to access.

Does my son/daughter have to self-isolate during this period? What about the rest of the family?

Only students who have been sent home to isolate as having been identified as being in close contact with a student that has tested positive need to self-isolate. Other members of the household can continue normal activities provided they do not display any symptoms. We would ask that you try to help us to protect the community by following the national lockdown guidance and ensuring your child does not leave the house except for exercise and to do essential shopping as necessary.

What if my son/daughter has been asked to self-isolate until a date that is later than Monday 30th November?

If you have been told your child's period of self-isolation ends after Monday 30th November, then they must stay at home until the full 14-day period has been completed. They must return to school only on the date that you were originally told in the phone call you received from school staff. If you are unsure about this date, please contact your child's year team and we will be able to confirm when they can return to school. Your child **must** continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days even if they have a negative COVID test, in order to protect the whole community.

What if my child tests positive?

If your son/daughter tests positive for COVID-19 then please phone the school on 01708-630002 (Monday-Friday 7-30 a.m. to 4-00 p.m.) and 07912-379506 (at all other times, including weekends). The guidance from the NHS remains that children and adults should only get a test if they begin to develop symptoms, namely a high temperature, a new or persistent cough or a loss of taste and smell. Please see the link to the PHE 'Stay at Home' Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.

How will work be provided?

We are currently transitioning from Go4Schools to Microsoft Teams. Work will be uploaded to Go4Schools and some staff will run lessons via Teams. Where lessons are run via Teams, your son/daughter should look to attend – these lessons will be accessible using the login details that they have been provided with. It is essential that students will be expected to follow their school timetable as far as possible and will have work set from all their subjects at the appropriate times. If there are any issues, please contact your child's pastoral team.

Please note that the number of confirmed cases in school remains relatively low and the large number of students we have identified as 'having been in close contact' is due to the effectiveness of our track and trace system being employed. These robust measures represent a determination from our whole school team to reduce risk to an absolute minimum where possible.

On behalf of my staff and I, thank you again for your on-going support. Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,



MR. W. THOMPSON
Principal