

Dear Parents,

Late yesterday afternoon we received an update for Oldham secondary schools from the local Director of Public Health in relation to COVID 19.

The letter stated:

While Oldham schools saw lower rates of Covid-19 in the first half of the autumn term compared with many parts of the country, we did have some sizeable outbreaks and our case rate does continue to be higher than we would wish. In addition, we are entering into the winter season when viruses are likely to be spreading more throughout the population. We know that you have already implemented measures to restrict the spread of COVID in your schools, including supporting routine LFD testing for staff and pupils, increasing ventilation, and continuing with robust cleaning regimes.

We feel that it is important to strengthen these measures now, before we see any increases in our case rate. There is a risk that if we wait until rates are even higher, we will have waited too long to control the spread.

The letter went on to recommend two additional measures that they are asking Oldham's secondary schools to implement from **Monday 8th November**. These are:

- a. The reintroduction in secondary school settings of face coverings for staff and students when moving around the school and in communal areas. Pupils will not need to wear face coverings while sitting at their desks in classrooms, whilst eating or outside.
- b. All students and staff members who live with someone who has COVID-19 to do daily lateral flow tests (LFD test) before coming into school (unless they are exempt). Pupils should start this testing from the day their household member either became unwell with COVID-19, or tested positive if they did not have symptoms, and continue this for 10 days.
 - If a child tests negative, they can continue attending school.
 - If a child has a positive LFD result, they must start isolating, have a PCR test and should inform school.

As parents will have seen from Friday's letter, we are pleased that there have been no positive cases in the school community so far this half-term. We are frustrated with the timing of the letter we received yesterday, and I apologise for sending this update over a weekend. However, through the pandemic we have followed the advice and recommendations of the local public health team and we will do so again. **Therefore I am asking for parents' support with these two measures above from this Monday 8th November.** Please can I also stress the importance of pupils wearing face coverings on the school buses. I attended the buses yesterday afternoon and had to remind many of the pupils about this.

In terms of the impact upon Speech Night on Monday, Public Health have confirmed that the only impact upon this event is that pupils should wear face coverings as they arrive and leave the Queen Elizabeth Hall. They do not need to do so whilst seated or when receiving their prize.

Yours sincerely,

CJD Mairs (Principal)