

18 September 2020



Holderness Academy
& Sixth Form College

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you to update you on how things are going following the re-opening of school last week. It is likely I will continue to write to you quite regularly to try to keep you fully informed about what is happening and the decisions we are making as a team, in response to Covid-19.

Firstly, I want to say what a fantastic start to the year our young people have made. When we re-opened, we did not know for sure how our new arrangements would work and what our attendance might be. We were absolutely delighted that attendance was over 98% which was well above the national average. Thank you for the way you have supported your child on their return to school and for the way you have worked with us as we put new arrangements in place. The support from you has been crucial in getting students back and I am enormously grateful.

You will be aware that we have put a huge range of measures in place to try to operate our school as safely as possible. All of our arrangements are under continuous review and when we find things that might make students and staff safer, we make changes. Our risk assessments are constantly evolving, and these are available for you to view, should you wish to do so. Please be assured that everything we put in place is designed to maximise safety.

Looking at what is already happening across the country and locally, we would be foolish not to be concerned about the risks and challenges in staying fully open.

There are two circumstances in which we would be required to send some students home:

- If there is a positive case that might lead to an outbreak;
- If the number of staff required to isolate becomes so great that the school cannot safely operate

We are doing everything we can to prevent either of these eventualities. However, this is already much more difficult than we had expected. To keep a school fully open we need a highly effective test and trace system.

We appreciate the difficulties parents face if their child is unwell as we are clearly already well into the autumn cold season. As a rule, children can come to school as long as they don't have any one of the three symptoms the NHS regard as the most common Coronavirus symptoms:

- New continuous cough
- High temperature
- Loss of taste or smell

If your child has the above symptoms they should isolate at home (along with the rest of the household) in line with government guidance. You should seek to get a test, although we do recognise the enormous difficulties people are facing.

If a child becomes unwell at school with any of the three symptoms above, they will need to go home and follow the advice above.

Explorer • Scholar • Leader • Collaborator



As soon as a person displays any of the three symptoms, it is considered a “suspected” case until a test is carried out and a result is returned. If a test is positive, it becomes a “confirmed” case. It is important we are clear about the difference. In the event of “suspected” cases, there is no need for communication from the school to parents as most suspected cases turn out not to be Covid-19 and because partial information is of no use to parents. In the event of a positive case of a student or a member of staff, the school will take advice from Public Health and communicate with all affected students and parents as quickly as possible.

In the event that a student is isolating at home, if they are well enough to do schoolwork, it will be available. The school will provide details of how that will work. In the event that a whole class is at home, we will endeavour to deliver teaching remotely at the same time as the timetabled lesson in school. Where a student does not have access to an appropriate device at home, we will attempt to loan the appropriate technology to them.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been extremely proud of our students’ resilience and it has been nothing short of a delight to see them back in school. I have been particularly impressed with their mature attitude and compliance to the wearing of face coverings this week. I have also been really grateful for the hard work and professionalism of our staff. Undoubtedly, we have a challenging few months ahead but please rest assured we all continue to do all we can.

Next week, I would like to update you on our support network in school and also some key updates and improvements that have taken place throughout the summer.

Please take care.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Wilson', written in a cursive style.

Mr S Wilson
Headteacher