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Parent information - Covid-19

Dear Parents / Carers,

There is a lot of information in this email, as well as an attached document - I would appreciate you taking the time to read through it all, so that you can support the school in keeping everyone as safe as possible during this pandemic.

I would like to add an additional layer of reassurance for parents by walking you through the decision-making process I go through when we are informed of any positive test cases. Hopefully parents will see that all decisions are based on the guidance and that you can be confident that the school is following the correct procedures.

The process:

I have a flowchart and checklist on my office wall that identifies each step that needs to be taken. This includes things such as:

1. Passing on our best wishes to the affected person and / or their family and wish them a speedy recovery.
2. Email staff to let them know where the case is and what actions need to be taken.
3. Contact the Local Authority and the Schools Alert email address with the details and the school's plan of action. The assistant director monitors this email and replies to confirm that the school's actions are appropriate.
4. Contact Thames Valley Health Protection team to inform them of a positive test – we have a school reference number so that all reported cases are held in the same place.
5. Contact the Department for education helpline to inform them of a positive test, again all cases are stored under our school reference number.

The Health Protection team and the DFE helpline check the answers to the following questions:

- Is the case a member of staff or pupil?
- Are there 1 or more cases in the same bubble?
- Are the cases linked to any previous positive test in the setting?

We then begin to go through each case and discuss the dates of symptoms and/or positive test results. Once I have given them the dates, we then begin the track and trace procedure relating to the 48 hours prior to any symptoms starting (or in the case where the person is asymptomatic, the date of the positive test result).

The 48-hour period is related to the period of time the positive case is infectious and the reason why the school doesn't need to take any action if a pupil or member of staff has not been in contact with the Highwood community during that time. This is Public Health England advice.

Is it really important that parents understand the information in the attached document so that we don't have children attending school if they have symptoms. It is also vital that parents inform us immediately with any children experiencing symptoms and/or positive test results so that we can minimise the risk of any transmission and put our protocols into action quickly and effectively.

I hope you find this detail useful and thank you for your support.

Best wishes,

Matt Hickey

Headteacher