

26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear parents/carers

## Re: Easter break update

As we rapidly approach the Easter holidays I would like to share with you some of the highlights and challenges we have faced over the last four weeks since our return to school following the third National Lockdown.

**Our mass Lateral Flow Test programme achieved over 4200 tests** in 12½ days which was a truly incredible effort by our staff team. We identified 5 positive cases which whilst small as a percentage of tests completed, it has helped stop the spread of the virus both within the school and the wider community – without the test these students would not have been aware that they were carrying and passing on the virus at home and at school as they had no symptoms whatsoever. My thanks go to all those families that supported the testing programme and the amazing team of staff at school that helped complete the tests. Students attending were very mature and impressed us with their exemplary behaviour. It is equally important now that all families complete the tests at home to continue to manage infections in our community. All students will have received their home test kits by this Wednesday and will receive further kits after the Easter holidays. **Please note that the Government are asking that testing continues twice a week during the holiday period.**

It has been really pleasing to see the vast majority of our students return to school and re-engage with face to face teaching with a great attitude. This is important as we begin the work once again of picking up on the lost learning of students and the gaps in knowledge created by lockdown.

We currently allow **students to wear PE kit on the days they have PE** however a significant number are not wearing the expected apparel and are also wearing it on days when they do not have PE. This is unacceptable. A number of schools in the area have paused PE lessons and insisted on full uniform because of similar issues. I do not want to do this as PE is intrinsically linked to positive physical and mental well-being. Therefore, could you please ensure your child adheres to the expectations set out in September – see below for details:

*Please note that if students have PE on their timetable on a school day, they must arrive to school in their Phoenix PE kit and suitable outdoor jackets/coats due to current guidance. The PE changing rooms are currently closed and therefore students should not bring any valuables into school as the school cannot take any responsibility for them. If there are any concerns, please contact a member of the PE department. On days when students do not have PE on their timetable, they should wear their full school uniform (see school's website for further information).*

The urgent need to contact families due to positive cases over recent weeks has highlighted the fact that many contact details are out of date. It is extremely important that we hold the correct contact details for all students so please can I ask that, **if you have changed your details over recent months, you let the school know without delay.**

As with tradition at the end of the term, **school will be closing a little earlier than normal on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April** – students will finish at the following times:

12.30pm – Years 8, 10, 12 & 13

12.45pm – Years 7, 9 & 11

All students will return to school after the Easter holidays on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April at their usual time. Please remember you child can access online wellbeing support throughout the Easter holidays via Kooth.com.

Please see below some important dates across the Summer Term:

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> April – INSET day (school closed to students)

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May – Bank Holiday (school closed to students)

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June – Half term Holidays

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June – Year 9 Parents evening

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July – Year 7 Parents evening

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July – Summer Holidays begin

Additional information about potential positive cases during Easter

In the event a student has to isolate over Easter you will appreciate the considerable impact upon the household. They will not be able to leave the house for 10 days and relatives will not be able to visit them. The guidance is intended as a further measure to mitigate against this potential situation.

All schools are expected to be available to support ‘test and trace’ for the first six days of the holiday period up to and including 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021. This is to help assist in identifying close contacts of confirmed Coronavirus cases and to provide self-isolation advice and support for students and their respective families. As of Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April inclusive, families are to contact NHS Test and Trace.

The government has asked schools to share with you the following guidance with reference to the Easter holiday period:

• **Where a student tests positive for Coronavirus having developed symptoms less than 48 hours since being in school**, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace and **contact the school on [covidresults@phoenix.sandwell.sch.uk](mailto:covidresults@phoenix.sandwell.sch.uk)** and provide us with the information below or by completing a form on our school’s website at <https://www.phoenixcollegiate.co.uk/form/?pid=465&form=60>

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| • Student name                                 | • When they were last in school  |
| • Year group and registration group            | • How do they travel to school:<br>walking/car/bus - who do they travel to school with |
| • Date of birth                                | • Any siblings at school   |
| • When they developed symptoms                 | • Contact Number   |
| • What were the symptoms                       |  |
| • Date of the test & type of test (LFT or PCR) |  |

• Where a student tests positive for Coronavirus having developed symptoms **more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted**. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

For more information about home testing, please refer to my letter sent on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 (also available on our school’s website).

Finally, I would like to wish you all a lovely Easter holiday.



Mike Smith  
Head teacher