



Sir Graham Balfour School

Member of Sir Graham Balfour Multi-Academy Trust

Our Ref: LDB / VM

28th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this brief letter finds you and your loved ones well.

As many of you will be aware, we are experiencing our first real 'outbreak' of Covid this week, since the pandemic began.

As of today, we have nearly 100 students and 6 staff off with Covid. I am in regular contact with other headteachers and the Local Health Team, and it is clear that we are not alone in this current spike of cases.

It remains my number one concern to keep the school open and running as normally as we can possibly make it. To help with this, I have asked students and staff to continue wearing their face coverings at all times inside the building – a decision I review every week. Face coverings, alongside sanitising, cleaning procedures in school, regular lateral flow tests and ventilation in all rooms offer powerful tools in reducing the spread of Covid; I hope they will reduce the extent of the current spike in Covid cases as well.

As concerned as I am about students contracting Covid, I am equally concerned about our staff. Such is the call on supply teachers across the town and further afield, that we cannot easily replace teachers if they test positive. If lots of our staff were to contract Covid, then I would have to consider other measures, including collapsing groups and even moving to remote teaching for some year groups, as has been the case in many other high schools in Stafford. Our contingency plans are fully in place, but I really hope that we do not ever have to move to them.

Another key tool in reducing risk is the Covid vaccine. Your children (if eligible) will this week have brought home consent forms for the next wave of vaccine administration, due on the 14th and 15th February. The nurses will be administering both first and second doses of the vaccine where appropriate. I do seriously urge you to consent to the vaccine, but please be assured that no child will be vaccinated without parental consent. The deadline for return of consent forms is the 10th of February, but if you miss this deadline, you can still book a vaccination slot locally, independently of the school.

As ever, I am deeply grateful for the support you give to your children and to the school, especially during these testing times.

My best wishes to you and your loved ones.

Mrs Beck
Headteacher