



21<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We want to make you aware that several members of our student community have tested positive for Covid 19. A number of these cases are within our Year 7 cohort. Many of these cases have been identified through the regular use of rapid lateral flow testing which is proving to be an effective tool for identifying and isolating cases of Covid amongst our school community. We are continuing to monitor the current case rate and are working closely with our local Public Health team and our Covid committee within college. This letter is to inform you of the current situation, outline the steps we are taking in school to limit disruption to education and provide advice on how you can support your child.

## Close Contacts

Since the end of the summer term, schools are no longer involved in track and trace arrangements. If any children have been identified as contacts of the confirmed case(s), they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will be advised to take a PCR test. Please be reassured that for most people, Covid will be a mild illness.

## Asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing

One of the most important strategies in place to limit transmission within the school setting is twice weekly lateral flow testing. We have previously had very high engagement with testing and this has played a key role in identifying cases before students entered the college. However, the recent testing statistics for the whole college have dropped to below 40% for each year group. This is too low. We need all students to test themselves twice weekly, on a Sunday and Wednesday evening, and just as importantly, to record all results (positive AND negative) using TestRegister.

Reporting all results allows us to track the uptake of home testing and implement supportive strategies in school to encourage those who have consented to regular home testing to actively do so. Please can we implore all parents to support your child with home testing and recording results every Sunday and Wednesday. Any students who require additional home test kits can collect them their House office, and additional kits for families can be ordered for free from here: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

## Symptoms

Typical symptoms of Covid are a new, continuous cough, or a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia). If your child develops symptoms of Covid, they MUST get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known:

- If the PCR test is negative, the child can end self-isolation and return to the setting.
- If the PCR test is positive, the child should isolate until at least 10 days after their symptoms appeared.

Please note that we have seen that additional symptoms of an upset stomach, runny nose, headache, sore throat or unusual fatigue (tiredness) could be early warning signs of a potential Covid infection. The local Public Health team have again advised us that students who are unwell with any of these symptoms should stay at home until they are feeling better. A PCR test should be booked immediately should any of the three typical Covid symptoms appear (see above).

If your child does develop Covid symptoms, you can seek advice from the NHS at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you should contact NHS 111 at: <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

### **Mask Wearing**

At the present time, mask wearing is not mandatory around the college site, however, this approach is under continual review and should we need to adjust this measure considering rising cases then we will do so. We strongly encourage all students to have masks with them each day. Mask wearing is required in assemblies and on the buses. Your support in reinforcing the importance of mask wearing as an effective tool for reducing transmission is appreciated.

As always, should you have any queries, please contact us at: [covid19@elycollege.co.uk](mailto:covid19@elycollege.co.uk)

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Simon Warburton  
Principal