

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

## Questions and Answers re: positive case in class 2R (pm) 15.9.2020

Dear Hazelwood Community,

I know that today's news may have come as a surprise/shock to many of you; please rest assured that we are closely following the guidance of the DfE and Public Health England (PHE) **and acted quickly in response to news of a confirmed case.**

I was, understandably, asked many questions at the gate this morning- I hope that this letter answers some of your questions but if you wish to ask any other question please email [office@hazelwood.enfield.sch.uk](mailto:office@hazelwood.enfield.sch.uk) . Thanks to you all for your co operation, patience and understanding today.

### **How many cases of Coronavirus have been confirmed?**

Only one case has been **confirmed**. An assessment was made by PHE (based on information provided by us); PHE advised that we needed to close class 2R bubble. Parents of 2R pupils have been contacted and advised.

### **Which year group is affected?**

The confirmed case is in 2R (the porta cabin classroom near the main entrance/ by the Nursery building); one class is closed NOT a whole year group.

### **Have the classrooms been cleaned?**

We know that the virus can possibly hang around on surfaces for up to 72 hours so 2R classrooms, toilets and regular touch points will be cleaned when it is safe. This is in addition to the thorough cleaning that already happens in school and the extra cleaning "fogging" that takes place every Saturday as an added precaution.

### **Why isn't the school closing?**

At this stage we only have a single case and we have been able to identify all the close contacts very quickly and to respond as advised. The advice is to open the school as planned with all the systems of control in place such as hand washing, good respiratory hygiene, enhanced cleaning and protected groups/bubbles.

### **What happens about siblings of 2R pupils?**

As per government guidance, siblings of 2R pupils are expected to attend school **UNLESS they have or develop symptoms.**

### **How do I know if I came into contact with the infected person?**

As we have pupils organised into class "bubbles" (or year group bubbles for Nursery and Reception) we know who came into contact with the infected person and have notified those who need to self isolate as a precaution. It is vital that parents and carers on site socially distance as much as possible.

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**If we have been in contact with a parent/child that has been asked to self-isolate by the school, are we also required to self-isolate and then track those we've subsequently had contact with also?**

No, the advice to self-isolate from PHE is only for those who had **direct contact**.

**Will it be better to keep the children home a bit longer until this episode is over?**

Due to the systems in place we have been able to identify those who came into contact with the infected individual, so we are expecting this to be contained and not develop into an outbreak. We will of course remain vigilant and keep you informed.

**If the people that have been asked to self isolate get tested and it comes back negative, are they allowed back into school before the 14 days is up?**

No, the advice is that they are still required to self-isolate for the full 14 days.

**Can you confirm more details of the infected case?**

As you might expect I am not able to release any further details of the case in respect to their privacy. As explained above we have contacted relevant staff, families and individuals. If the case was in regards to you/your child you will want as much privacy as possible. "Whats App" conversations about who may have the case are unhelpful and (can be) unkind.

**I want to keep my child at home, can I do this?**

We can understand your concerns and we wouldn't open the school if we didn't feel that the situation was contained. You will be aware that the government has announced that it is mandatory that all pupils should return to school and continue their education.

**My child is not in year 2R but I am still very concerned as within the household we have vulnerable people. Will it be better to keep the children home a bit longer until this episode is over?**

We are confident that we have identified all the people who came into contact in the same room for more than 15 minutes with the infected person; all the people self-isolating are doing so. We can understand that those of you with vulnerable households will be more concerned and will have heightened concerns and worries.

**Can children wear masks in school and in classroom to prevent it?**

Parents and Carers, who collect and drop off their children, ARE actively encouraged to wear face masks. However, the government guidance is that primary school pupils do not need to wear them in school, as there are other measures in place.

**My children were told to self isolate by the school and PHE. How will their Free School Meals be reimbursed?**

In the government guidance schools have been told that they need to provide either a meal or a food parcel for free school meals pupils if they are isolating. We are in touch with the catering company who will provide these and we will be in touch to discuss further. The voucher scheme has now ended.

**What happens if I don't send my child in?**

We will be in touch to discuss your concerns. The majority of our pupils are now back at school and unless your child is self-isolating as advised by Hazelwood, NHS or due to the you following government regulations on quarantine after travelling aboard from some countries; then they should be attending school. We don't want to issue fines at Hazelwood because we have good relationships with our families and hope that through discussion we can encourage pupils back to school. However it is in the guidance from the government that all pupils should now attend school. If a parent decides to home school their child then they should inform me (Mrs Kilkenny) in writing and they will be removed from the school roll.

**The children cannot socially distance (2 metres) in class; wouldn't it be better all around if there was a choice for Juniors to do 3 full days a week in school and 2 days at home and Infants to do 2 days and continued work (compulsory) at home. For those who can? This would keep the school open Mon-Fri and also free up space?**

The current Government guidance is clear that schools are now open full time for all pupils.

**Is it possible for children to have lunch in their classrooms so they don't have to use the lunch hall after other year groups? Could school dinners be taken to classrooms? I've heard other schools are doing this.** It was an option we considered, but if we move to classrooms for eating then it could only be packed lunches (hot lunches cannot safely be served in classrooms) and it doesn't make for a pleasant learning environment for the afternoon. Plus there would be the disruption of parents who rely on our meals service. We are currently keeping pupils in class bubbles on tables in the dining hall and we are cleaning in between sessions. As with everything right now it is a case of watch and review as required.

**How often are the children asked to wash hands and reminded of the Catch it, Bin it, Kill it?**

The teachers were asked to visit all the hand hygiene and Catch it, Bin it, Kill it when the children came back to school and will no doubt revisit it as and when required. Children are being asked to wash their hands throughout the day. There are also posters around classes and communal areas. Our pupils have been excellent at following these rules.

**How did the infected person get a test and the result so quickly?**

The case came about through a private test that was then verified as "a case of concern" by PHE. We know that it's frustrating in regards to getting a test at the moment; some people are reporting difficulties getting a test.

**What can we learn from this incident? Anything to be done differently by school going forward or to consider for us as individuals?**

We feel that everything that can be done is being done, whilst trying to run a school with some degree of normality. The challenge for everyone is following the guidelines OUTSIDE of school and trying to avoid bringing the virus into the school too. **We will soon provide you with an out of hour's/weekend telephone number enabling you to contact us ONLY in the event of a confirmed case.**

**Since the school will soon be let for classes over the weekends (Greek & Arabic school), what additional measures are the school implementing to ensure the school is safe for all?**

Cleaning arrangements are in place, including "fogging" on Saturdays as previously mentioned.

I hope that this letter has been useful and may have answered the questions that you have?

Best wishes

Tracy Kilkenny