



TANFIELD
SCHOOL

HARD WORK | TRUST | FAIRNESS

Dear parent/carers

I want to thank you for supporting us last week in getting students back to school safely. Our attendance was 97.61%, which was over 1% higher than the same period last year.

It was great to see all of the students again. We were so impressed with the way they adapted to the new way of working and their immaculate behaviour, uniform and positive attitude.

One of the new ways of working is for students to wear masks where social distancing is not possible. In my last letter I wrote the following:

“Whilst bubbles minimise contact with large groups of students, there is still some contact. Bubbles are in place of social distancing in schools. Bubbles make it easier to test and trace and isolate people who are in a bubble. However, if there is an infected individual in a bubble, there is a chance that the virus can spread through the whole bubble before it is detected. **We want zero transmissions.** Therefore, we are requesting that students wear face masks when it is not possible to keep social distancing.

In the last week the World Health Organisation has recommended that children aged 12 and over should wear face masks where social distancing is not possible. In other countries they are wearing face coverings. We are therefore going to request students wear a face covering for the first few weeks, when walking through corridors and in a classroom where social distancing is not possible. If there aren't any reported outbreaks from around the country then we will review the decision. We would rather be safe than sorry and ensure that all members of TeamTanfield are as safe as possible, in particular your older family members.”

Due to the size of our classrooms and the number of students we have, it means that social distancing is not possible in most classrooms. For example, in our north block, only 9 students could sit in a classroom and be socially distanced from each other. As you will realise, we don't have many classes that have 9 or less students.

Catching the virus is dependent on being exposed to the virus and how long you have been exposed to it. Therefore, it is possible to be in contact with someone with the virus but not catch it because you were not with them long enough, to take in a dose big enough for you to become unwell. This is another reason why we have asked for face masks in classrooms. Students are going to be together for an hour at a time. Therefore, an infected person would be near someone for long enough to infect them, if they weren't wearing a face covering to reduce the number of droplets.

We know that Stanley has suffered during the pandemic with a large number of deaths in the care homes and an outbreak in pubs over recent weeks. Once we are confident that there aren't as many infections in the local area and that there are no outbreaks in schools around the country, we will review our decision. So far this week we have heard of two schools where they have had a positive case. We want to avoid this and feel that our approach gives us the best chance of doing this.

TANFIELD SCHOOL
HEADTEACHER Steven Clough BSc (Hons) NPQH

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Students have been brilliant with wearing masks when they are needed and we want to thank you for supporting us by making sure they have a face covering that they can bring to school.

The Government has asked us to share information about getting a test for Covid-19. In Scotland, when schools went back, they saw a surge in the demand for tests from people without coronavirus symptoms. To avoid a similar surge in England, they have suggested that only students and staff who feel unwell, get tested if they develop one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- the loss or change of their sense of taste or smell, or
- they are recommended to get tested by a healthcare provider (e.g. GP or nurse)

If a student or staff member develops one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms described above, only they should be tested. They are saying that there is no need for households to have a test, unless they are also symptomatic. Unless a student or staff member has one of the three main coronavirus symptoms, they should only be tested if instructed otherwise by the local authority, health protection team or their GP.

As schools across England return, students may feel unwell, for example, with a sore throat, stomach upset or a headache. These students don't need to book a test but may need to stay off school and seek medical advice through their GP or pharmacist as usual.

If a student develops symptoms they must self-isolate for 10 days. If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10-day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

Other members of the household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

I realise that this is a worrying time but I want to assure you that your child and your family's safety is our number one priority and we will continue to do everything we can to minimise the risks to everyone.

Finally, please get in touch using the help@tanfieldschool.co.uk email address if you think that we can do things better.

Take care,



Mr S Clough
Head Teacher

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