

Dear Parents /Carers

On Friday we had to ask three class groups and their staff to self-isolate following two positive tests for COVID in staff. Over the weekend we have had confirmation of a further two positive tests for staff within those class groups. As we are required to do, we have contact traced all four members of staff to identify whom they had close contact with in terms of other adults in school.

Following a virtual meeting this morning to assess the impact of the recent positive tests on school we have taken the decision to close the entire school to pupils and ask staff not isolating to work from home until Monday 5th October.

We have taken the decision for the following reasons.

We now have a total of 31 staff self-isolating either as positive tests, contacts of positive tests, or with family members/dependents who are symptomatic and awaiting tests or have child care issues due to children being sent home from other schools.

We are very conscious of our vulnerable pupil population and the risk of infection to them.

We anticipate there may be further symptomatic staff who will need to get tested and isolate. If we were to re-allocate staff to cover the existing gaps in the current circumstances, we risk exacerbating the potential for further infection to other staff as well as not having sufficient experienced staff to do so in any event.

Finally, the Merseyside area has been identified to go into local lockdown and enhanced social distancing measures are being put in place due to the increased rate of infection in the community as a whole and we are aware that two other special schools in the Merseyside region have also had to shut.

It is with great regret that we have taken this decision but have assessed that we are left with no other choice. Our current risk assessment as per the guidance given to schools such as ours describes the organisation of

the school to reduce contacts; in class bubbles, base bubbles and the school as a bubble. Clearly the school bubble has been compromised and hence the need to close for this period of isolation. We realise this will be a difficult time and we do not take this decision lightly. The safety of pupils and staff is paramount for us. We also wanted to provide you with as much notice as possible.

We will of course be providing remote learning during this period.

I have attached a letter from Public Health covering eventualities such as this please do read it for guidance on what to do if your child does become symptomatic. Also please let school know if that is the case. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact school

Thank you.

Paul Cronin
(Headteacher)