

Lowton Church of England High School



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18 June 2021

Dear parents and carers

Weekly letter.

Thank you for your understanding this week when at short notice we had to move your child into remote learning or, in some cases, self-isolation. This is not a decision we took lightly and I am very grateful to a good number of you who have contacted us to thank us for the steps we took. As I hope you know, this was done to help reassure you that we were taking steps to reduce transmission of the new variant and to give everyone confidence that our control measures and procedures in school were working effectively. I have had daily contact this week with Wigan Public Health to ensure we are doing all we should be doing. The number of cases we have had is not unusual and it has been commented that, over time, the number of cases we have had has been remarkably low overall.

Update on mass testing this week: we have had six positive student cases in the last week. None are linked to each other and therefore are not likely to result from school. However, we have to take contact tracing very seriously and complete it as accurately as possible with the information we have. This has resulted in over 180 students being required to self-isolate. There has been one case in Y7, two in Y8, two in Y9 and one in Y10.

The importance of observing self-isolation and friendship groups meetings up outside of school: Our control measures in school follow Public Health guidance (handwashing, masks, ventilation, facing the front, hand sanitising, one-way systems, year bubbles). All these elements combined reduce the risk of transmission in school. Please help us by ensuring your child is as vigilant outside of school. Small gatherings and parties in houses are a big contributor to virus transmission. The virus does not discriminate between being in or out of school. The more preventative steps we can put in place in and out of school the greater the chance of minimising any self-isolation and the associated disruption to your child's learning and your household.

Of greatest concern is when students have been asked to self-isolate and this is not being observed. Some students who have should be self-isolating have been seen in public. This is against the law and where we become aware of it, I have escalated it to the appropriate authorities. You could be subject to a fine that starts from £1,000 for not observing self-isolation requirements. Please inform school where you have concerns.

End of year examinations and assessments: The need to switch to remote learning and for to isolate some students has had a significant impact on our assessment plans. Y10 have finished their exams this week with little disruption. The Y10 parents' evening will take place on **Thursday 8 July** and reports will be sent home on **Friday 16 July**. For Y7, 8 and 9 some assessments had to be paused. We still plan to complete end of year assessments in some subjects but we have lost time to do this fairly for all students and in the detail we had planned for. Our current plan is for Y9 to complete their remaining assessments next week. The dates for these exams have been posted on the noticeboard on SatchelOne. Y7 and 8 will complete assessments in science, MfL and history from Monday 28th June. We will report on all subjects in the end of year report, which you will receive on **Friday 16 July**.

Remote work for students self-isolating: The work for students in **Y7, 8 and 9** will be posted on the **noticeboard** on SatchelOne. Students should email their completed work to staff. The work for students in **Y10 and Y9 RS** will be posted on students' calendars. This needs to be submitted via SatchelOne.

I am going to set up a series of year-based webinars to talk to you and students with more year specific details. I will confirm these to you next week. Thank you for your understanding and continued support. At times, we have had to change our good intentions and plans at very short notice because of the current situation.

Kieran Larkin
Headteacher

CARING, LEARNING AND SUCCEEDING

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