



Harriers Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy

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Dear Parents/Carers

Informing Parents/Carers about Covid-19 cases

In our Harriers Advisory Committee* meeting last week we were asked why we no longer report individual Covid-19 cases.

There are 2 reasons:

- Government guidance for schools regarding the reporting of cases changed in December, when close contacts no longer had to isolate. At this point the guidance changed so that close contacts would be informed by the Government's Track and Trace service, not the school.
- GDPR - if we announce a singular case in a class it is easy for pupils and parents to work out who it is from class absences, therefore breaching a child's GDPR rights on anonymity.

What we do:

- We monitor Covid rates in school on a daily basis.
- If we see cases rise in a particular class or year group we enact our contingency plan and bring in protective measures, such as bubbles.
- If the cases rise above 15% of a cohort we send a 'warn and inform letter' (issued by OCC), which tells families that there is a Covid-19 spike in their child's class/year and that they should do daily LFD tests.
- If cases continue to rise we would contact Public Health for advice.
- All cases are reported to Oxfordshire County Council
- If a class is disrupted by a teacher Covid-19 absence we ask the teacher's permission to inform the families of that class - or the teacher will inform families directly via Seesaw.

As we move forward, we will need to learn to live with Covid. We do not feel, as a school, it is beneficial to give regular updates on cases which can cause undue concern, but would rather inform families if there is a spike in their respective year/class. In this case, no news is good news!

I attend an OCC Education/Public Health Covid-19 briefing every Tuesday to be kept up to date on the local and national picture. Since we returned in January, national and county rates have dropped week on week, but cases in schools (especially primary) have risen exponentially. There have been outbreaks in many local schools, but Harriers has maintained consistently low levels across classes. In the last week, cases in primary schools have dropped locally and nationally; cases in primary schools dropped by over 1000 in Oxfordshire's primary schools alone. So the general picture, in schools and the wider population, is encouraging.

In school we have very low case numbers in pupils: only 2 confirmed Covid-19 absences across all classes yesterday. We have, however, had three members of staff test positive in the last 48 hours (all with none of the main symptoms) so we remain vigilant and continue to ventilate, social distance where possible and test at least twice a week (daily if close contacts).

I hope you feel reassured that as a school we still take Covid-19 and the safety of all our staff, pupils and families very seriously. We are delighted that case numbers continue to fall and that as a result we are able to start opening our doors more, but we will continue to monitor our numbers very closely and we will bring back our previous restrictions if we feel necessary.

For all other sickness/illness/ailments/hygiene (e.g. chickenpox, nits) we follow up to date guidance issued by the relevant bodies (NHS, OCC, DfE).

Please contact me via the school office if you have any further questions.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Pearson', with a small flourish at the end.

Alex Pearson
Executive Principal

* The Harriers Advisory Committee (HAC) is a group made up of parents and staff. We meet 5 times a year and discuss how the school operates from a pupil and family perspective, from communication and upcoming events through to PE kit and the tuck shop. Much of what we discuss has a positive impact on how we act as a school. Please see this week's newsletter for more information and please contact the school office if you would like more information on how you can join the HAC.