



# Aylesford School

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020- This letter contains really important information, please read very carefully.**

Dear Parents/Carers

It is no secret that this year has presented many challenges for us all!

The health, welfare and safety of students and staff have always been my top priority and we acted quickly to put measures in place to minimise the spread of coronavirus. We have followed guidance from the Government and Public Health England to the latter and worked hard to keep the school open for as long as we possibly could. Many students, staff and myself included, tested positive without initially having any of the three main symptoms of a high temperature, loss of taste and smell or a new and persistent cough instead we experienced other symptoms such as headaches, migraine and sickness. Having had coronavirus myself and now also having lost family members and good friends who have sadly lost their lives to the virus, my advice is, if in doubt - get tested! I am sure we all want to enjoy Christmas but please also follow the, main rules of hand washing and sanitising, wearing your face coverings and maintaining a safe distance.

I am immensely proud of the achievements and character shown by all of our school community at this difficult time. I am proud that we have been able to offer a full timetable of live lessons and am impressed with the high levels of engagement for on line learning which as we know cannot replace the school experience but has been a real success. The pastoral team have been supporting students' mental health and well-being and we have also delivered hampers to members of the school and wider community.

## **TRACK AND TRACE OVER THE CHRISTMAS BREAK**

Last week the government wrote to all schools informing them that they should remain on –call for the first part of the Christmas break to deal with any positive cases of Covid-19 and to continue to undertake track and trace work.

Therefore, the school will be available at the following times for you report any positive case of Covid-19 in a child that attends the school:

**Friday 18/12/2020 until 23/12/2020**

**between the hours of 08:30 and 10:30 each day.**

**From 24/12/2020 the school will be fully closed until 3/1/2021** and the start of the new term. During this time all positive Covid-19 cases should be reported through the NHS track and trace system.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>



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**There is no need to contact the school regarding positive cases between 25/12/2020 and 3/1/2021.**

You **should** report positive Covid-19 cases to the school if the following applies:

- Your child has received a positive Covid-19 test result before or on 24/12/2020.
- The positive case is for your child who attends the school.
- If the symptoms started before 20/12/2020 regardless of when the test was taken
- Your child was in school in the last week of term.

You **should not** contact the school to report a positive case if:

- A member of your family or close contacts, other than your child has received a positive test result.
- Your child is symptomatic but has not yet received a positive test – we recommend that you have a test if symptomatic.
- The symptoms started after 20/12/2020 meaning the infectious period prior to symptoms was after the end of term.
- The symptoms or receipt of a positive test result are after 24/12/2020.

**When reporting a positive Covid-19 test to the school you should email me:**

**[tanya.kelvie@aylesford.kent.sch.uk](mailto:tanya.kelvie@aylesford.kent.sch.uk) with the following information:**

- Your child's name, year group and class group. For example – Joe Smith, Year 7, 7E.
- The date of your child's positive test result.
- The date of first symptoms
- A list of close contacts outside of lessons. Close contact is considered to be within 1 metre of anyone else for any duration of time and includes, skin on skin contact. Or 15 minutes or more within 2 metres.

The school will then enact its standard track and trace protocol and will inform parents/ carers of close contacts accordingly.

If you receive a positive result for Covid-19 after 23/12/2020 or before you return to school, we ask that you notify us of your child's/ family isolation period and when this ends. You should not send a child back to school in January if they are unwell, have Covid-19 symptoms or if your family is currently isolating as a household following contact with a positive case.

## **CORONAVIRUS TESTING**

We have just received information that mobile testing centres **will not** be available to schools in Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling or Tunbridge Wells this week. This means we will not have specific access to testing to staff and students on school site.

However, I have been informed by KCC that as of today that testing offered to students and staff will be via the national web portal, the usual place where tests are booked, with eligibility being broadened to include asymptomatic staff, students and their families. This means that if you would like a test, even if you have no symptoms, then you can now book one through the usual online booking portal which can be found here:



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<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

On the website, when prompted you should select:

- "no" to being an essential worker,
- "no" to having symptoms, and
- "no" to being part of a trial or pilot.
- Then select "My local council or health protection team has asked me (or someone I live with) to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms"

## **RAPID TESTING IN JANUARY**

Schools have now been informed of access to rapid testing early in January. Whilst information on how this will work is still quite vague, it appears that it will involve the delivery of rapid tests for teaching staff to administer in schools. From the guidance released this week, it appears that all staff will be tested once a week and students and staff will be tested daily if they come into contact with someone who has tested positive at school. The aim of this is to reduce the number of students who are required to isolate and keep schools open safely.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges/coronavirus-covid-19-asymptomatic-testing-in-schools-and-colleges>

From this guidance it seems that tests will be optional, no one will be forced to have a test but if a test is refused then that person may have to isolate as they would currently. It is also clear that anyone with symptoms still has to isolate even if their test is negative.

This testing will be with us in early January and as you can imagine we can only comprehend this being quite a significant logistical challenge in terms of numbers of tests and staff training. However, once we have a better idea of how this will work, I will of course be in contact with more details.

A Q and A page has been set up for parents and can be found here: <https://dfemedia.blog.gov.uk/2020/12/15/mass-testing-in-schools-your-questions-answered/>

To confirm, this won't mean a regular test for ALL students and staff, just when they have come into contact with another positive case and these tests will NOT be mandatory, no one will ask your child to take a test without your consent.

Hopefully, if this works and rolls out properly, it will enable us to isolate fewer students and keep the school running at capacity through what looks like a challenging start to the year.

Ours students mental health is also very important to us and I am pleased to be able to include the following communication from the Kent Community Foundation Trust in case our students need support.

### **Message from the Kent Community Health Foundation Trust**

**Have you noticed a change in your child's behaviour and worried they may be experiencing anxiety?**



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They may be

- finding it hard to concentrate
- having trouble sleeping and/ or a change in appetite
- seeking constant reassurance
- feeling nervous or on edge.

If you feel your child is struggling and needs extra support, call the emotional health consultation line on **0800 011 3474** to speak to our team (option 1 then option 2). A school nurse will listen to you, provide basic coping strategies and if needed, support with a referral to the children and young people's (CYP) counselling service. Young people are also welcome to call the consultation line themselves, or if they prefer, they can text in confidence by text, through our ChatHealth service on **07520 618850** (monitored 9am-5pm Monday to Friday)

Kent Community Health Foundation Trust (KCHFT) provides support for children and young people's physical and emotional health needs, including the CYP's counselling service.

More information on all our support can be found at [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/school-health](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/school-health) or [www.kentyouthhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.kentyouthhealth.nhs.uk).

## List of support organisations that you may find useful:

<b>Young Minds</b>	<a href="https://youngminds.org.uk">https://youngminds.org.uk</a>  Useful website with lots of information for young people. Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis – all texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors and texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus	Call – 0808 802 5544  Text: text YM to 85258.
<b>Kooth</b>	<a href="https://www.kooth.com/">https://www.kooth.com/</a>  Free, safe and anonymous support for young people	Contact them directly through their website
<b>The Mix</b>	<a href="http://www.themix.org.uk">www.themix.org.uk</a>  You can talk to The Mix for free on the phone, by email or on their web chat	Freephone: 0808 808 4994 (1pm - 11pm daily)
<b>SHOUT</b>	<a href="http://www.giveusashout.org">www.giveusashout.org</a>  Shout is a 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need help.	Text: Shout to 85258



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<b>Childline</b>	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a> Anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Trained counsellors.	Tel: 0800 1111 – FREE
<b>Papyrus</b>	<a href="https://papyrus-uk.org">https://papyrus-uk.org</a> The prevention of young suicide	Call - 0800 068 41 41 Text - 07786209697
<b>The Calm Zone</b>	<a href="http://www.thecalmzone.net">www.thecalmzone.net</a> The Campaign Against Living Miserable – A useful website with tips, strategies and support.	Call - 0800 58 58 58 5pm – 12am
<b>Thirteen</b>	<a href="http://www.thirteen.me.uk">www.thirteen.me.uk</a> Online support for young people about a range of current issues that young people may face.	Contact them directly through their website
<b>NHS (111)</b>	<a href="https://111.nhs.uk/?utm_source=nhsuk&amp;utm_campaign=homepage">https://111.nhs.uk/?utm_source=nhsuk&amp;utm_campaign=homepage</a> 111 Online -	Call – 111
<b>School Safeguarding Contacts</b> – If you have a safeguarding concern about a student at Aylesford during this time you should contact one of following Designated Safeguard Leads at the school		
<b>Miss T Kelvie</b> – Head Teacher	<a href="mailto:Tanya.kelvie@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Tanya.kelvie@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	
<b>Mrs N Land</b> – Deputy Head Teacher	<a href="mailto:Niamh.land@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Niamh.land@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	
<b>Mr D Wright</b> – Assistant Head Teacher	<a href="mailto:Dave.wright@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Dave.wright@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	
<b>Mr P Neeve</b> – Progress Leader	<a href="mailto:Phil.neeve@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Phil.neeve@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	
<b>Mrs N Severn</b> – Pastoral Manager for Year 7/8 and 6 <sup>th</sup> form	<a href="mailto:Nikki.severn@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Nikki.severn@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	
<b>Mrs T Hodgson</b> – Pastoral Manager for Year 9/10/11	<a href="mailto:Tracy.hodgson@aylesford.kent.sch.uk">Tracy.hodgson@aylesford.kent.sch.uk</a>	

## COMMUNICATIONS OVER THE BREAK

It feels like there has rarely been a time when there has been so much need for a restful, proper break. This year has been an incredible challenge for all of us and I hope that you and your families are able to enjoy the time together. I also need the school staff and their families to find some space this break to recharge and relax following an incredibly challenging term. I will also be taking a break from the 24<sup>th</sup> December until we return on the 4<sup>th</sup> January.

In order to achieve this, with the exception of the track and trace emails up to the 24<sup>th</sup> December, the school will be fully closed, this will include the temporary pause to all school



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communications such as emails and telephone enquiries. I am respectfully asking that all communications with the school are temporarily held until we return on 4/1/2020. Thank you in advance for your support it is much appreciated by myself and the staff team.

## **FESTIVE CHEER- ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LAST DAY OF TERM (Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December)**

We expect all students to fully participate in the arrangements for the last day of term. Students are encouraged to wear the Christmas jumpers, tinsel etc. and enter into the festive cheer. The retiming for the day are as follows:

8:30 – 09:15	Period 1 (As listed on your normal timetable)
09:15 – 10:00	Period 2 (As listed on your normal timetable)
10:00 – 10:45	Mentor time and assembly
10:45	The school day ends and the Christmas holiday starts!

These lessons will contain festive fun and an opportunity to see your friends.

Please can you send photos in of students in their Christmas attire so that we can spread the cheer on social media.

I hope that you and your families are able to enjoy a restful, much needed Christmas Break and wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Miss T Kelvie - Head Teacher



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Miss T Kelvie, NPQH Head Teacher  
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**RESPECT** SELF-DISCIPLINE **COURAGE**  
OPEN-MINDEDNESS **MOTIVATION**  
**RESILIENCE** CONFIDENCE **INTEGRITY**  
COMPASSION **CURIOSITY**