

# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Green Road, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 1EP

Tel: 01335 343 685 Email: enquiries@qegs.email Twitter: @qegs\_ashbourne

Web: www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr S Garrity Chair of Governors: Mr C Smith



2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, Students and Staff

## Weekly Bulletin #36

Thank you for your support and understanding with what has been a challenging week for many families and school staff affected by Covid 19.

This last week, we have experienced more confirmed Covid 19 cases than we have had in the previous 15 months and this has resulted in all of Year 8, 40% of Year 10 and small numbers in other year groups working from home. Approximately 320 students from our school population have been self-isolating to limit transmission. We have also had between 13-15 members of staff absent, most working from home if they have been fit and able to do so. Thankfully, any illness or symptoms have been mild and students, staff and any affected family members are all recovering well.

Staff absence is now decreasing and students working from home will start to return to school in the coming days. We have been in regular communication with the DfE and East Midlands Public Health Authority who have agreed with and supported each of our actions. They have also approved our adapted plans for Sports Day and other summer term events which we very much want to run.

All areas of the school continue to receive enhanced cleaning through the day and every evening, and all areas of the school accessed by the students who tested positive have had additional cleaning. Form tutors have updated members of their tutor group on the situation and offered them reassurance. We are regularly reviewing all actions we are taking, and we believe appropriate measures have been taken to continue to ensure the safety of students and staff.

## Plans for September 2021

We want to give families and staff as much notice as possible regarding the plans for the start of the autumn term. The government have issued the following guidance on 28.06.21:

*Given the uncertainties about the Covid situation we will face in the autumn, we want to help secondary schools and colleges to be as prepared as possible for all scenarios, **including testing on return after the summer holidays, if needed.** Schools and colleges may choose to start testing students and pupils no earlier than three days before the start of term, **or stagger the return of pupils during the first week of term if they would like to do so.***

Therefore, we are unable at this stage to confirm if testing will be needed in the autumn. However, we will plan for this provision just in case. We already have a well established routine for September staggered starts. To support the new Year 7 and 12 cohorts who have had limited transition opportunities and to allow capacity for any testing, our plans for a staggered return for September 2021 will be as follows:

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Staff INSET day, school closed to students

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Year 7 and 12 return

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Year 10 return, Years 7 and 12 in school

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Year 8 and 11 return, Years 7, 10 and 12 in school

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021 - Year 9 and 13 return, all year groups in school

These plans could be subject to change dependent on any government decisions around testing and/or vaccination programmes and we will update and amend if required.

## Community Day – 9<sup>th</sup> July

Students will be running **Race for Life in aid of Cancer Research**. The work of Cancer Research will be discussed in class prior to the race. Please let your child's tutor know if this is likely to cause any distress.

The day will consist of: the 5km Race For Life to fundraise for the wider community, team building activities in houses to build our community, a community trail for our local community and activities which relate to improving our school community. If everyone who raced received just a £5 donation, then we would raise over £5000 at next Friday's event!

The fundraising link is <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/qegs-ashbourne>.

The day will be non-uniform and **the theme will be pink, white and blue**, £1 is payable via ParentPay.

## Mary Poppins Jnr

This week the cast and crew have worked hard to put together the production of Mary Poppins. It has been such fun to return to rehearsals and work towards a show. This year again COVID kept trying to take us down, but 'the show must go on' and so it did. The cast worked tirelessly to put this together in such a short time, the production team and we are very proud of our young talented cast. As ever they smashed it and we hope you enjoy the video once it is available. We cannot wait to get going on next year's production.....watch this space!



## Pride Month

During the month of June, QEGS staff and students celebrated Pride month. Pride month is about acceptance, equality and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community. It calls for people to recognise how damaging homophobia can be. Students have been creating Pride themed pop art in Art, looking at Pride related poetry in English and learnt about MADDO (Madrid Pride) in MFL lessons. We finished the month with a wonderful rainbow themed non uniform day. It has been wonderful to celebrate Pride month, but we must remember that acceptance and respect is something we aspire to all year round.

Please follow @qegspastoral on Instagram to follow our exciting school events and a peek into our day to day experiences.



## Online Safety

Imagine if all the harmful features of the digital world were in traditional toys. Would you allow children play with them? Welcome to the World of Twisted Toys!

Twisted Toys is a brand-new service from the 5 Rights Foundation that is a superb resource for both parents and children alike. There are a series of short video 'adverts' for each toy: Share Bear, Stalkie Talkie, My First Terms and Conditions, Wakey Wakey, Pocket Troll, Pay as you YoYo and many more. For example, Pocket Troll "scrutinizes every minute of your existence, then torments you with personalised comments and mild psychological torture. These trolls do it all; body shaming, racism, homophobia... Plus everything is public, nothing gets forgotten and somehow you will still feel lost without it in your pocket."

This is an excellent resource and a great conversation starter for discussions about privacy and rights online. You can access the Twisted Toys web site [here](#).

#### Reminders:

**Students must sit with their bubble (year group) on school transport [sitting in the same seats, and with the same people] both on the way to and from school.** Students must clean their hands before getting on the bus in the morning, and upon arrival at QEGS. They must also make sure to use hand sanitiser as they arrive at and leave their lessons, and before embarking on the bus at the end of the school day. This limits the risk of infection but also this could mean that whole bus groups do not need to self-isolate. **However, when students move seats or do not follow the guidance the risk of spreading infection is higher and the whole bus group may need to self-isolate.**

#### What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school, you must inform school of the absence and you must request a test via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

**You must also notify us of a positive test outcome using this school designated telephone number 07890 319042 during the school day or out of hours** (even if this is late at night or early in the morning, the sooner we are notified the sooner we can respond and inform other parents of our actions). This telephone number **must only be used for positive Covid test results**. This will ensure that parents can avoid other busy school telephone lines, notifying us quickly and at any time of day or night, enabling us to react and respond appropriately.

If a positive test is returned, the 10-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill with COVID-19 symptoms. Household members should not go to work, school or public areas and exercise should be taken within the home.

Further information about positive test outcomes is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

#### Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

However, there are a range of other possible symptoms, and so please be vigilant, continue to test regularly, and book a PCR test if at all worried.

**For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.**

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

## How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

Do:

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Take the lateral flow tests at least twice per week, before school on a Monday and Thursday

### Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

**Reporting you are feeling unwell with COVID-19 symptoms is sometimes a difficult thing for a young person to do, and something they always take very seriously. Therefore, please avoid commenting or speculating on cases as this often increases anxiety for those experiencing symptoms.**

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend watching Wimbledon and/or the Euros. Or, avoid both and enjoy the outdoors! Whatever you and your family do, please observe the current guidance. 'Hands, face space' is still very much good practice and will keep your children and your family safe and well.

Yours faithfully



Mr S Garrity  
**Headteacher**