

17th December 2020

Dear Parents\Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you well. It has been a very challenging term for all sorts of reasons that will be obvious to you all. However, your support and understanding have been invaluable to us and have helped us get through the term. I also want to say a massive congratulations to our wonderful students who have worked so hard and adapted brilliantly to all of the changes to school life. Lastly, I would like to pay tribute to my excellent staff without whom what we do at HWS everyday would simply not be possible. I am proud to lead this amazing school community, and that is primarily because I get to work with all of you.

As we close for the Christmas break, you may be aware that the Department for Education will be facilitating weekly coronavirus testing in schools. Initial information about this formed part of Education Secretary Gavin Williamson's press release ([here](#)) on 15th December. Full details are not yet available to schools, but we will alert you as soon as we are able.

In the meantime, Haringey have asked that we alert you the fact that short-term, local testing capacity for people without symptoms will be made available at our local testing centres at Stamford Hill Primary School N15, Irish Centre N17 and Alexandra Palace. This will be accessible to secondary school students and their families as well as secondary school staff. Booking would be through the national portal by families or staff members themselves.

People can book via the usual NHS portal ([here](#)) by clicking through the various sections until you are able to 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"** This offer is specifically aimed at secondary schools, but the council are also following up on any possible eligibility for primary schools, and will be in further communication if we receive any updates about this.

Haringey inform us that this testing offer for people without symptoms will be available up to and beyond the end of term. We will let you know if this changes. They say that, as far as possible, people without symptoms who want to get tested should get a test well in advance (at least 3 days) before going back to school.

I attach below another communication from the Local Authority, from Dr Will Maimaris, Director of Haringey Public Health, giving some useful general information for keeping safe during the holiday period. Please read it and follow the guidance, particular the procedures to follow should your child show any signs of Covid-19 over the holidays.

Highgate Wood School Student Council supports individual action to address the issues of Climate Change and promotes the United Nations top 10 recommendations.



5-minute showers



Drive less



Lights off



Local produce



Recycle



Meat-free meals



Zero-waste fashion



Unplug



Refill and reuse



Bring your own bag

The school will continue to monitor our “hotline” for reporting positive test results: **0208 342 7975** and our “hot email” **covid@hws.haringey.sch.uk**. We will only get in touch with you, however, if your child had a positive test result or developed coronavirus symptoms before Sunday 20th December. We will not have responsibility for any contact tracing after this date, prior to the beginning of the spring term on Monday 4th January 2021. When contacting us, please give the following information: students full name, the date covid specific symptoms first started, the date of the covid test and a contact number.

We will be contacting you before the new term begins with key dates and other information. In the meantime for those of you who celebrate Christmas, a very merry Christmas to you... and for those of you who do not, I wish you happy holidays and quality time with your families.

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher

Dear Haringey Parents, Carers and Guardians,

During the past few weeks, we have seen an increase of COVID-19 cases across all of our age groups in Haringey – including our children and young people. With the school holidays coming up, I want to remind you that we must all play our part to protect our loved ones and the community. Our local schools and childcare settings have done a great job in protecting children and staff these past few months, and it is important we all keep following the rules over the holiday period so that children, students and staff can return safely to them in the New Year.

What can you do to help keep the community safe?

The past few months have been very hard on all of us, but especially for young people. I know that many of you are looking forward to meeting up with friends and family during the holiday, but please remember – even though it is allowed - this carries a risk. The more people we mix with, the greater the risk. So please, keep numbers small.

I would urge you to be extra careful during the holidays and continue to wash your hands, ensure social distancing, and wear a face covering when in an indoor public setting. This will not only continue to keep our elderly and vulnerable population safe but help limit the spread of the virus overall.

But most important of all, if your child shows any sign of COVID-19 over the holidays or when schools reopen, make sure they get a test immediately and keep them at home, along with the rest of your household, until you know the result. A test can be booked online via the NHS portal: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by phoning 119.

If you are not sure whether your child should be in school or childcare, please check with NHS 111 before dropping them off.

Should your child receive a COVID-19 test?

Any child showing one of the three main COVID-19 symptoms (see below) should book a test immediately online via the NHS portal <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by phoning 119. Children with one or more of the COVID-19 symptoms who do not receive a test, will need to self-isolate for 10 days regardless of whether they feel better after a few days.

If a child in the house is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms, the whole household has to go into self-isolation immediately and wait for the child's test result to come back. It is important that the entire household stays at home and does not see anyone from outside the home while they wait for the result, as this will prevent the virus from spreading to other people.

What to do when the test result comes back?

If the test is negative, the child can return to their school or childcare setting when they feel well enough, and their household/s can stop self-isolation immediately.

If the test is positive, the child should continue to complete their 10-day self-isolation. Household members will also need to continue to self-isolate for 10 days. The reason the isolation period is 10 days for those within the home, is because that is how long it can take for symptoms to develop, and if you socialise with others during this time you could

unknowingly pass the virus on. Family members living with someone who is positive with COVID-19 do not need to get tested unless they also become unwell.

The three main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- High temperature – this means a temperature of 37.8 degrees or above.
- Loss or change to sense of smell/taste
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing fits in 24 hours (a usual cough may be worse than normal)

Most people will have at least one of these symptoms and children only tend to get mild symptoms.

Testing is currently only recommended if you develop any of the COVID-19 symptoms.

Planning on travelling during the holidays?

International travel is not recommended at this time with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advising against travel to most countries. However, if you do plan on travelling outside of the UK, please follow the current travel advice for the country you are travelling to. Most countries are not on the 'safe travel list,' which means most families going overseas will have to complete 10 days of self-isolation when coming back to the UK. Families with children who will not be attending school as a result of international travel and self-isolation, should please notify the school so that they are aware.

I kindly ask that you help your child's school or childcare setting by following the guidelines and advice within this letter. By doing so, our schools and childcare settings can continue to keep your child, and their staff, as safe as possible.

Thank you for all your fantastic support and co-operation thus far. Wishing you all a happy holiday.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W Maimaris', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dr Will Maimaris

Director of Haringey Public Health