

20th March 2021

Dear Parents\Carers,

I do hope you and your family are well and have been able to share our enjoyment in having had the children back in school for two weeks. There is no question that school is the best place for them, and I have been heartened by their good behaviour, their positive engagement and their happiness since school return. This coming Tuesday, 23rd March, is a National Day of Reflection, marking a full year since the first lock down and providing the opportunity to reflect on all those who have been victim of the pandemic. In common with many others, we will be marking this occasion with a one minute silence at noon.

It has been a very challenging year, and we do know that the challenges are going to continue for a while longer. Attached please find a letter from Haringey's Director of Public Health concerning the need for additional testing in the N10 and N11 postcodes following the discovery of a Brazilian variant of the coronavirus in the area. Nevertheless, we continue to see positive signs of change and the vaccination programme across the UK has gone well thus far. On a personal note, I too had my first Covid jab on Monday, and although I was a little unwell on Tuesday as a result (apologies to those year 7 parents whose appointments I was unable to attend on parents' evening) it is encouraging to know that we are moving closer to something that resembles normality.

Whilst we are still unable to plan any major relaxations to the current restrictions for the time being, there are changes happening. On Friday we were able to give all students in Years 7 to 11 the opportunity to retake their school photograph and, as I mentioned in my letter last week, we are reintroducing music instrumental lessons for most year groups from Monday 22nd March and are now also planning for Year 7 instrument lessons after Easter. We also have a return to some formal assessments, with Year 13 taking part in their evidence gathering assessments. One impact of this will be that the changing facilities for Key Stage 4 PE students will not be available, thus we are asking those students in years 10 and 11 taking PE to come to school in their PE Kit. Students in years 7, 8 and 9 should also continue to do the same, as they have been for the whole of this academic year to date.

On a separate note, it is with pride that we witnessed many of our sixth formers pay tribute to Sarah Everard and, once more, raising the issue of gender based violence and the sexual harassment of women and girls. Before the pandemic, we ran a Model UN event on gender based violence - supported by Annie Lennox as well as our own Global Feminists group - and a member of the sixth form was courageous enough to share her experience of sexual harassment in a series of whole school assemblies. I hope the renewed focus on this very serious issue will

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

continue to inspire everyone in the Highgate Wood School community to press for change and reform. I will be doing an assembly this for all students coming week to reiterate our values and ethos as a school in relation these important issues, and reminding all students of our expectations. Please keep an eye on the school website for more information around the current campaign.

Having now provided in-school testing to all students, we have moved into the next phase of the rapid LFD testing programme where students (and staff) have been issued with home-testing kits and will be testing themselves at home twice a week (we suggest Sundays and Thursdays). A reminder that a positive LFD test taken at home does need to be confirmed by a PCR test, but the school does need to be informed of both so that we are able to take appropriate action. For any positive test please use our Covid hotline (020 8342 7975 or covid@hws.haringey.sch.uk). Please use this to report any positive Covid-19 test result for a student in the school. If your child has to self-isolate because they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive outside the school community, could you please contact us through the student absence line (0208 342 7970 and then Key 1) or 0208 342 7978 in the case of the sixth form. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those staff who were involved in the testing programme. This was a very significant undertaking for all schools and I am so proud of the way that our staff members and our amazing parent volunteers made everything run so smoothly. We absolutely could not have done it without you!

You may be aware that we are currently advertising for a number of positions in our Senior Leadership Team. These arise from the departure of Craig Hewitt to take up a Headship in 2020 and the retirement of Dawn Spence last summer, but are also part of a wider plan to develop as a school and respond even more effectively to students' pastoral and wider needs. I will be sharing more information about this structural review with families after Easter.

Whilst the UK continues to make strides towards controlling the pandemic, please be mindful that we are still under National Restrictions. Students do need to be reminded that they should return straight home after their day at school, and maintain their social distancing and safe behaviours as much as they possibly can.

With thanks for your continued support.

Regards



Patrick Cozier
Headteacher

19th March 2021

Dear families.

This is to make you aware that COVID-19 testing is going to be increased in the west of the borough after the national Test and Trace system discovered a case of the COVID-19 Brazilian variant in the N10 postcode of Haringey, with connections to nearby Barnet postcodes in N10 and N11.

There is a link back to recent travel to Brazil. The case was picked up through prior surge testing and NHS contact tracing teams have undertaken a comprehensive investigation to identify any further contacts. We are working with Public Health England (PHE) and the Department of Health and Social Care to carry out a localised testing programme in the specific postcode areas of N10 and N11.

Please note that the risk level in Haringey has not changed and that testing is being done for surveillance purposes. Everyone in this area should continue to follow current lockdown guidance. Those who cannot work from home, should still go to work. Schools and businesses in the area should continue to operate in line with lockdown guidance.

Severity of variant

There is currently no evidence this variant causes more severe illness, or that the approved vaccines would not protect against it. Research is being done into how well this variant responds to vaccines. People should continue to follow the public health guidance and lockdown rules as there is no evidence of any increased public health risk locally – and overall COVID-19 rates are now significantly lower than they were in December and January.

How contagious is the Brazilian variant?

Similar to the evidence collected from the variant first identified in the UK, there is some evidence that this variant can spread more easily than the original version of the virus.

Do the current vaccines work against the Brazilian variant?

Public Health England and partners closely monitor the spread of variants in the UK, rapidly investigating variant mutations in the lab to determine their characteristics. They are continuing efforts to understand the effect of the variants on vaccine efficacy and there is currently no evidence to suggest that vaccines will be ineffective. If required, future vaccines could be redesigned and tweaked to be a better match to these variants, as is the case for seasonal flu vaccines.

What to do if you're in the affected N10 or N11 postcodes

Haringey and Barnet Council are working in partnership with NHS Test and Trace to provide testing to residents in selected postcodes in N10 and N11. We are asking everyone over the age of 16, living in the affected postcodes to take a test, if they don't have symptoms.

We will be doing this by delivering home test kits to some addresses **starting Saturday 20th March** and asking other homes in the affected areas to get tested at one of the local Mobile Testing Units (MTUs). See further below for details of the MTUs locations.



All affected postcodes will receive a leaflet through their door telling them how they will be tested.

Residents can check to see if their postcode is affected by using this link:

https://eforms.secure.haringey.gov.uk/ufs/CFMH_CHECK.eb?ebd=0&ebp=10&ebz=1_1616150169203.

Door to door home testing kits

From Saturday 20 March, Haringey teams will be going door to door to some addresses offering home PCR testing. These will be collected from the home and sent off to determine if the COVID-19 is present - and which variant it is. A test is only advised for those aged 16 and over and a test can be taken even if you've been vaccinated. The Mobile Testing Units will be set up in the local area from Friday 19 March.

If you miss our visit from the council

Anyone who wasn't in to receive the test kits can get a test at one of the MTUs or at one of the collection points.

Mobile Testing Units (MTUs)

From Friday 19 March, 3 MTUs will be offering tests to everyone in the affected areas who will not receive a door-to-door home test kit.

MTU locations:

- Summerland Gardens Car Park, Muswell Hill, London N10 3QN (from 8:30am to 3pm).
- St Peter Le Poer Church (Car Park), Albion Ave, London N10 1AQ
- Power League Barnet (Car Park), Trott Road, Off Colney Hatch Ln, Friern Barnet, London N10 1ST

How long are we testing for?

Targeted testing is planned to last for up to 2 weeks and will be kept under close review. To ensure our enhanced testing is delivered as safe as possible to our community our teams will:

- wear Haringey printed high visibility vests
- have ID stating they are working on behalf of Haringey
- wear appropriate PPE
- maintain a safe distance
- help you as much as possible in explaining your test and registering it

They will not ask:

- for personal details
- to pay for anything, or
- require access to the property.

For more information, please see the council website: [COVID variants in Haringey | Haringey Council](#)

With Kind Regards,

Dr Will Maimaris, Interim Director of Public Health, Haringey Council