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Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your understanding regarding the information about a class closure. Having now been through the process in order to decide who needs to self-isolate, I thought it would be useful for you to have a clearer idea on the decision-making procedure in case we are in the unfortunate position where it happens again.

I am pleased so many of you contacted me as it helped me to put together a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document that may alleviate your concerns and answer future queries. This is attached to the bottom of the letter.

If your child should have a positive test result, please ensure you contact me immediately: headteacher@barham.kent.sch.uk This can be at any time as I check my computer regularly in the evening and at weekends. This is important as closing a class takes time to organise and it has a big impact on families needing to re-organise their lives too.

Please read the information in the FAQs below and as always, do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further clarification.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Al Higgins'.

Alison Higgins



Frequently Asked Questions

How do you decide who needs to self-isolate?

Once I receive notification about a pupil testing positive for COVID-19, I have a list of people I need to speak to before contacting the Department for Education (DfE) and Public Health England (PHE) for the South East.

This includes the class teacher to find out class activities in the 48 hours prior to the child displaying symptoms* or test, if asymptomatic and Alan Gower to check whether the pupil has attended Breakfast/After School Club.

The phone call to DfE and PHE is to go through a series of questions to decide on which children need to self-isolate. The criteria for this can change according to latest research and the situation in the local area. At the moment, it is for any other children/adults who:

1. Had face to face contact within 1m of infected individual for 1 minute or more
2. Had extended contact of 15 minutes or more within 2m of infected individual

Using this criteria, it was not necessary to ask Year 6 to self-isolate.

*This can make the difference between one class or two classes being asked to self-isolate. To give you an example, had the pupil tested positive the week before, I would have closed Year 6 too because I could not be confident about which children in Year 6 were within 2m of the infected pupil during the Remembrance Service.

Do siblings have to self-isolate too?

No, only the children who are in the same class/bubble. This is the same principle as 'Track and Trace'. If you were asked to self-isolate because a colleague of yours tested positive, only you would need to self-isolate at home; the rest of your family could continue to go to work/school/shops etc.

What would happen if a pupil who attends Breakfast Club/After School club tested positive?

This would mean as well as the class, any child in the BC/ASC bubble would need to self-isolate too. BC/ASC is divided into two bubbles only – Wrens/Jays/Owls in one bubble and Key Stage 2 in the other.

What if we have been asked to self-isolate and we don't have a laptop/iPad for the remote learning?

We can lend you a laptop from school. Please contact the office.

Why don't you check each child's temperature as they come in to school?

Initially, we did this during the spring term but schools generally do not do this now because of medical research which indicates not all children with COVID-19 get a temperature. In fact, the pupil who tested positive last week did not have a temperature. The advice comes from Dr Matt Butler, COVID-19 assessor at Addenbrooke's Hospital. He regularly holds virtual meetings with Local Authorities, Headteachers and teaching unions to inform us of the latest findings and guidance.