

The person dealing with this matter is:

Lorna Smith
Public Health Team
Newcastle City Council
Civic Centre
Barras Bridge
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8QH

Email: lorna.smith@newcastle.gov.uk
www.newcastle.gov.uk

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If you need this information in another format or language, please contact the sender.

Dear Parent/Carer

Parent/Carer Information: COVID-19 Outbreak at Gosforth Academy

Thank you for your support to date in helping to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.

As you may be aware there has unfortunately been a recent increase in cases of COVID-19 among those students attending Gosforth Academy. This means that a significant number of students are self-isolating and missing face-to-face education. We wish to do everything possible to control this outbreak in order to protect anyone becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 and prevent further impacts of self-isolation on our school community. Newcastle City Council and Public Health England are working closely with the school to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to reduce the risks of further transmission of COVID-19 both in school and the wider community. We write to ask for your help and support please to help reduce the risk of transmission out of school.

Whilst restrictions for COVID-19 have eased nationally, Newcastle, like most other areas of the North East is currently seeing a rise in cases. As such, it is very important that we all continue to follow public health guidance and take the necessary precautions to reduce any potential onward transmission, both in and out of school or work or whilst socialising. This includes following the '**Hands, Face, Space and Fresh Air**' guidance in our daily lives.

Feeling Unwell

Whilst the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are, a new continuous cough, a high temperature and/or a loss of or change in normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), these are not the only symptoms and these symptoms do not always present themselves. It is therefore

important that you **do not send your child to school if they are feeling unwell for any reason**. Please try to 'think COVID-19' first.

If you or your child does display any one of the main symptoms of COVID-19, please get a PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test as soon as possible. To book a test, either call 119 or go to the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test. The whole household must self-isolate until the results are known. If negative, your household can return to normal daily activities provided they feel fully well. If any member of the household subsequently becomes symptomatic at any point, even shortly after this, the process must be repeated.

If a positive result is obtained, the whole household must self-isolate at home for at least 10 **full** days, from the date the symptoms first started. They should only return to school (or work) after 10 days if their temperature has returned to normal and they no longer feel unwell. If they still feel unwell, please seek medical advice.

Lateral Flow Device Testing

Regular twice weekly testing with an LFD (Lateral Flow Device) helps to detect COVID-19 in those who **do not display symptoms**. We would ask that you and the adults and secondary aged pupils you live with, continue to undertake regular LFD tests, including during the school holidays, and report the results please. More information on LFD tests can be found at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/ .

Close Contacts

If you are advised that your child has been identified as a 'close contact' with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, it is important that they self-isolate for a **full 10 days**, after the last date of contact. This date will be confirmed with you.

Individuals who have been in close contact with someone who's tested positive should now access a free PCR test at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119. We strongly advise that if your child is a **close contact**, they take a PCR test before the end of their period of self-isolation in line with the current public health guidance. They should do this even if they have returned a negative LFD test during the period of their self-isolation. This additional precautionary testing will help to reduce any possible transmission within the school and community, and also reassure you and your child(ren).

If a negative PCR test is recorded, then your child will be able to return to school when their **full** period of self-isolation is complete.

If the PCR test result is positive, the whole household must self-isolate and follow the advice of NHS Test and Trace.

If you experience any difficulties in getting a PCR test through calling 119, please advise the operator that you have been advised by Public Health England and the Public Health department of Newcastle City Council to book a test for your child.

Self-Isolation

Self-isolation is a very important measure in helping to reduce transmission of infection both at school and in the wider community. Self-isolation means staying at home (not going out for any reason) for the **full** 10 days advised and not mixing with anyone outside the household.

There is help available for anyone struggling with self-isolation. Newcastle City Council's Welfare and Wellbeing Team may be able to help. Visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/welfare or call 0800 170 7001 (8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-3pm Saturday) to get the support you need from employment or financial support to mental wellbeing and practical advice.

Your household may also be able to apply for self-isolation [Test and Trace Support Payment](#) by providing evidence your child/young person has been told to self-isolate by their school at <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/welfare-benefits> or facilitated through our Welfare and Wellbeing team.

Vaccination

We strongly encourage those eligible to take up the offer of the COVID-19 vaccine when invited by the NHS to do so. The vaccines are safe and effective and provide the best protection against COVID-19. More information can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/>

Whilst we appreciate that you may be anxious that the school has a number of active cases of COVID-19, it is important to note that, in most cases, COVID-19 is a relatively mild infection from which most people make a full recovery. Please be assured that we are working together to reduce any further spread to protect everyone at risk and minimise the ongoing disruptions to all our lives. Your ongoing help and support are very much appreciated.

Thank you for all your efforts.

Yours sincerely



Lorna Smith FFPH
Assistant Director of Public Health (Acting)
Newcastle City Council



Mark Patton
Assistant Director: Education and Skills
Newcastle City Council



Preit Chahal
Principal
Gosforth Academy