

## **Covid-19 updates at The Portsmouth Academy**

Dear Parent / Carer,

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this communication - I appreciate that you have received multiple communications from me as we adapt to the fast changing circumstances at TPA.

As you may know, earlier this week we unfortunately had to place the whole year 9 cohort on a remote learning system. This decision was made due to increased numbers of positive cases within this bubble and a need to halt any further spread of the virus within this year group, the wider school and the wider community.

In Portsmouth the rate of infections is rising, and unfortunately, we are seeing this reflected within our school community.

Thankfully, we have been able to effectively manage the situation by following national guidance and working closely with our Trust and the local authorities. Our risk assessment and our local track & trace procedures have meant that with any positive case we have been able to swiftly identify any students or staff members who needed to self-isolate.

I wanted to highlight to parents that we are now at a point this week where the school is seeing the number of cases of self-isolation and staff absences grow nearly daily, placing our remaining staff under immense pressure. As you know, our priority at all times has been the safety of students and staff and we must consider at all times how the level of absence impacts our responsibility to deliver the highest standard of education.

**Due to this, the Senior Leadership Team and I have had to take the difficult decision to close the school to Year 10 on 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020. We have also had to make the decision to close to Year 8 from the 23<sup>rd</sup> November for the week. All lessons will be accessible via MS Teams.**

**We will be writing to the whole school on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> confirming any changes for W/C 23<sup>rd</sup> November.**

We are currently working with the relevant bodies to consider any further measures we may need to take; such as limiting the number of students on site at any one time by moving to a rota model.

### **What might learning look like on a rota system?**

- **Learning in school**

Your child's timetable would not change. This includes their start and finish time as well as their lesson schedule. There are different ways this might look.

- Your child's teacher is delivering lessons within the classroom.
- Your child's teacher is delivering the lesson via Teams on the large screen to students in the classroom with another member of staff facilitating the room. This would be in cases where staff are required to self-isolate, but are not unwell.
- A cover supervisor or another teacher may deliver the lesson set by your child's subject teacher. This would be in cases where a member of staff is unwell and therefore unable to teach from home.



The  
Portsmouth Academy

- **Learning from home**

Students not in school would switch to our digital learning strategy. Whilst away from the classroom students must stay at home and work remotely. Students in this case are required to attend all their lessons – including morning registration, which is a vital welfare check. Students would log onto Microsoft Teams during their allocated lesson times to receive work from their subject teachers. Physical work packs would be available for students without digital access.

This decision will not be made lightly and I want to reassure you that we are working with our Trust, the local authority and Public Health England, ensuring we are going above and beyond to keep everyone safe. You will be kept up to date and reminded of the rota via our usual communication methods, including MyEd, letter, our website and our social media channels.

I hope you and your families are keeping safe during these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

**Rachel Grey**

**Principal**

**The Portsmouth Academy**

[info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk](mailto:info@theportsmouthacademy.org.uk) | 0333 360 2200