

Wednesday 4 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope and trust that you are well.

I write, briefly, further to the Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19) on 31 October 2020 where he announced the New National Restrictions that come into effect from tomorrow, 5 November. You can access the transcript of his statement, and HM Government guidance on the New National Restrictions here:

- www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-31-october-2020
- www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november

Whilst the existing measures we have implemented at the College are already in line with the requirements of these new restrictions, e.g. the mandatory use of face coverings in corridors and communal areas, there are some other actions we will be taking. The Department for Education (DfE) have only moments ago provided updated guidance for schools, however, so I respectfully ask for your patience while we ensure that the information we want to provide you with is confirmed to be in line with Government guidance. I will write to you again to with more information and to confirm these actions with you as I possibly can.

One crucial piece of information we have been waiting for that I am now able to confirm for you is with respect to the implications of the New National Restrictions for the clinically extremely vulnerable members of our community, i.e. those 'at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19'. Earlier this afternoon, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) updated their guidance on 'shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19' to bring it in line with the new restrictions, which you can access here:

- www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

Whilst there remains some clarification necessary for educational settings — and again, I will contact you as soon as we receive this clarification — I am now at least able to confirm the following:

- All members of staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable 'are strongly advised to work from home. If [they] cannot work from home, [they] should not attend work for this period of restrictions.' We have a very small number of teaching staff for whom this applies, and we have procedures in place to ensure teaching can continue as effectively as possible given the circumstances (we will provide you with more detail in my subsequent letter).
- All 'children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school while this advice is in place... Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school'. We will ensure that all children who are clinically extremely vulnerable will receive remote education and that any such student who is eligible for free school meals will receive such.

- Please note also that it does not necessarily follow that any child originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable remains so and thus needs to follow the original shielding advice (the original definitions of clinically extremely vulnerable changed). If you have not had it confirmed by your child's GP or specialist clinician that your child is still clinically extremely vulnerable and thus advised not to attend school, please do to speak to your child's GP or specialist clinician.

In short, there are 2 ways a person may be identified as clinically extremely vulnerable: they either have one or more of the [conditions listed in the guidance](#) (adults), or their hospital clinician or GP has added them to the [Shielded Patients List](#) because they are deemed to be at higher risk of serious illness if they catch the virus. (If your child is not on the Shielded Patients List, and you think there are good clinical reasons why they should be, please do discuss your concerns with your GP or hospital clinician.) The Government has stated that they 'will write to everybody who is clinically extremely vulnerable to set out detailed advice while the new restrictions are in place'; additionally, if your child is clinically extremely vulnerable, you should have received a letter in the summer informing you that the requirement to shield at that point had been paused, and that your child remained on the Shielded Patients List in case future restrictions necessitated that they shield again — as is the case now.

Please inform us if your child is clinically extremely vulnerable. You can do this by completing [this short form](#), or by contacting us by email or telephone. And of course, if you wish to speak to someone for further guidance or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. To reiterate, I will write again as soon as possible with further, pertinent information, and respectfully ask for your patience in the meantime. Of course, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any pressing concerns or require further information.

I thank you again very much for your continued support.

As ever, keep looking after yourselves, and each other.

Yours sincerely,



Derrick Brett (Principal).