



29 June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Update

I am writing to give you an update on recent events in school regarding COVID-19 and share some highlights from our Recovery Plan and Personal Development programmes.

COVID-19

Managing responses to positive cases of COVID-19 continue to be challenging, especially as I have experienced differences in comments made between Public Health England and NHS Track & Trace. I appreciate it remains a concerning time as the Delta Variant is impacting across the Bradford District, but I wish to assure you that we continue to implement protective measures to create as COVID-19 secure environment as possible. We have had several cases recently which has impacted on many more children as we have followed our well-established protocols in line with guidance – these are precautionary measures to support the prevention of further transmission, it is not because they are all suspected to have COVID-19. With this letter I have included the Bradford Council COVID-19 response check lists as we have experienced single, multiple and complex cases resulting in having to send large numbers of pupils home to self-isolate; I appreciate this adds to levels of concern but the response is a measured response and in line with the national guidance.

I have received an email from a parent/carers as they were concerned in the number of cases in one year group and I include some of the response here to give an example of our response and the complexity of the situation:

“The discussions I have had with representatives of Public Health England (PHE) have, most recently, included my concerns regarding the advice representatives of NHS Track and Trace are giving to parents/carers. Often, cases are and have been complex and I discuss these with the appropriate representatives either by telephone or email. One of the cases reported on Monday 21 June 2021, was the same as a case I had dealt with the previous week which was discussed in detail with the PHE Team in Bradford. A child was absent Monday and Tuesday as they felt unwell and had no known symptoms of COVID-19; they completed Lateral Flow Tests each day that were negative; the child returned to school on Wednesday and then completed another routine Lateral Flow Test on Saturday morning which tested positive. I contacted PHE and asked about the rules regarding the infectious forty-eight-hour period as the parents/carers informed us they contacted NHS Track and Trace who informed them that the symptoms they are recording is a runny nose from the point of being unwell on Monday. The previous forty-eight-hour period regarded as the most infectious was Saturday and Sunday when the child was not in school (the child was not in school the following Monday and Tuesday from the point NHS Track & Trace recorded symptoms). However, I believe the period when the child was in school (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday – which was a period when they did not have symptoms) should be regarded as an infectious period and so I, and the team we have established, began our usual process of contact tracing as the PHE team could not provide me with the answer to my concern.....From the discussions with the PHE Team they were unable to answer my concern and have escalated the case for review to the senior team as runny nose, headache, stomach ache and feeling of a head cold are not regarded as symptoms of COVID-19; PHE have reported back that the only known symptoms of COVID-19 are high temperature, continuous cough and loss of taste and/or smell. However, NHS Track & Trace are identifying headache and runny nose and informing parents/carers of this but not schools.”

The point regarding known symptoms was clarified in an email from a member of the Public Health England Team in Bradford in an email to all schools on Friday 25 June 2021:

“ COVID symptoms have not changed

There has been a lot of coverage in the media about differences in the COVID symptoms of the more infectious Delta variant. Some experts have advocated for including runny nose and headache as defining symptoms of COVID based on preliminary data. Although runny nose and headache can be present in COVID, they are not defining symptoms. Those symptoms can manifest earlier in the course of COVID or even be the only symptoms, but most frequently they will be symptoms of other diseases.

In terms of public health, the same three symptoms have been defined as a threshold for triggering action, to maximise identification of cases and to minimise unnecessary self-isolation. For COVID public health action these symptoms are still a new continuous cough, fever, or loss of taste/smell.

For other symptoms such as a runny nose, diarrhoea and vomiting (in the absence of COVID symptoms) please continue to follow your existing public health protocols of excluding infectious staff or children until 48hrs symptoms free."

In each case I work with a COVID-19 case management team:

- Headteacher – overview and contact with PHE and members of Bradford Education Team
- Headteacher's PA – liaison and tracking and manager of notification to the Local Authority
- Attendance Safeguarding Manager – Seating Plan assessor and attendance checks
- Parental Engagement Officer – Seating Plan Assessor and attendance checks
- Assistant Headteacher's – Seating Plan review with teachers
- Year Teams – contact with parents/carers for social contacts and identified proximity contacts

Through review of individual cases we look at any links between individual positive tests and groups of pupils by assessing social contacts and in class proximity contacts.

In other recent cases we have had three pupils at Key Stage 4 who are known social contacts with only one of them attending school on Monday 28 June 2021; one of them identified symptoms of being unwell on Sunday evening and a second had a Lateral Flow Test before school on Monday morning. Unfortunately, we had another pupil attend school today who is awaiting a PCR test as they are feeling unwell. It seems that the message we keep reinforcing of staying home and to not come to school if you have symptoms is not always being followed.

In each of the cases, we have assessed contacts and discussed cases with representatives of Public Health England to identify how best to minimise transmission, send children home to self-isolate to minimise transmission and minimise disruption to the continuity of education. In recent cases our practice was reviewed by one of the team in the Local Authority and they agreed we are following protocol.

Therefore, please can you ensure that:

- **If anyone in your household is unwell and awaiting a PCR test that the household self-isolates until the result is known meaning your child should not attend school**
- **If anyone in your household is unwell and has a positive test result on a Lateral Flow Device that the household self-isolates until a PCR is taken and the result is known**
- **That if your child has a stomach upset and is vomiting that they do not attend school until forty-eight hours after their sickness symptoms have gone**
- **Lateral Flow Tests are completed on a regular basis – I wish to thank all our pupils who are continuing to take the tests as this is helping to keep us all as safe as possible**

Year 11 Transition to Level 3 studies and Leavers Lunch

On Monday 28 June 2021 we welcomed back Year 11 students after their programme of study was suspended due to the Assessment 2021 procedures which were all submitted on time for both KS4 and KS5 qualifications. All students returning had a Lateral Flow Test in our re-established Asymptomatic Testing Site (AST) with one test registering positive. The students have begun learning sessions for the courses they intend to study next academic year with the programme supporting aspects not fully covered during Years 10 and 11 as a consequence of COVID-19 and national lockdowns or starting new course content as a foundation for everyone being ready to start Level 3 courses in September. Alongside this the National Citizen Service (NCS) are delivering sessions on Mental Health Awareness, Politics and Democracy, Careers and Employability and Post COVID Socialisation. This programme is part of our whole school Recovery Plan aimed at supporting pupils and students to reengage in their learning and building on their confidence as they take their next steps.

On Friday 2 July 2021 we will be hosting our Year 11 Leavers Lunch to celebrate their time with us and spend some time reminiscing with Mr Russell and Miss O'Neill.

Attendance

Attendance during the autumn term exceeded national benchmarks; we continue to work hard with individual families to ensure that where there are issues e.g. confidence, health and well-being etc. these are addressed through strengthening partnerships. As part of our Recovery Plan we have created a new post in school – Parental Engagement Officer, Mrs O'Hara, who started with us on 9 June 2021; a big part of her role is to work with families to build relations with other support networks to improve attendance where there may be challenges for individual children.

The Government have been publishing information through the Office for National Statistics (ONS) based on school attendance:

The average weekly attendance for Titus Salt School for September 2020 to end of December 2020 was 91% (National LA Maintained secondary attendance was 78%)

The Government ONS also published attendance figures for two key benchmarks:

National Gov.uk figures – 25 March 2021 – 87%

TSS figures – 25 March 2021 – 89.15%

National Gov.uk figures – 22 April 2021 – 91%

TSS figures – 22 April 2021 – 91.3%

Once again, we are pleased that our children continue to focus on wanting to be in school.

Personal Development

We have successfully begun to re-introduce some of our extra-curricular provision. A STEM/Well-being programme was organised for all our Year 8 pupils alongside an Outdoor Adventure programme as part of the school's wellbeing recovery plan. All Year 8 pupils in two half year groups were involved in two separate two-day outdoor adventure activities including canoeing, archery, climbing and mountain biking. My thanks to Mr Trusselle for organising the event with Baildon Recreational Team and our members of staff who volunteered to participate and support the events.

RSPB's Wild Challenge Award

Pupils are working towards the RSPB's Wild Challenge Award. Eco-club restarted in December with a keen band of Year 7 pupils, they conducted a habitat survey on the school site identifying areas that were good for wildlife and areas that could be improved. Good things were found in the conservation area such as bug hotels and log piles, these provided excellent habitats. The pupils also found a wide variety of species in the lawns surrounding the main path towards the school. Problems that were identified was that in places the grass on banks was being mown too often and by letting it grow it would provide a better chance for wildflowers to grow and this in turn would support insects.

Transition activities.

In the summer, pupils had the opportunity to take part in both our six-word story competition and the summer challenge task and we received lots of fantastic entries for both which made decisions very difficult for our panel of judges. Our budding writers followed a series of steps to create wonderful and effective six-word stories like our top prize winner, 'Souls rest, if we let them' by Ayesha. This was closely followed by our 2nd entry, 'Ascending. Clouds. Turbulence. Lightning. Brace. Regret' and 3rd place, 'Cold blooded regret cornered me in!' All winners received vouchers. For the summer challenge, pupils had a wide range of tasks that challenged their reading, writing and creative skills and again vouchers were up for grabs. Libby was our first-place winner as she blew the judges away with her presentation and the fact that she had attempted each task.

Pupils raise money for the Lifeboat

After spending many holidays on South Beach, Bridlington and having a fascination with watching the lifeboats launch into the sea, Year 9 pupils, Abi and Evie decided to raise some much-needed funds for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution: Saving Lives at Sea. Abi and Evie have held many different fund-raising events over many months, contacting local businesses for their support, including a raffle to win a Fish supper from the local Fish & Chip restaurant, numerous Cake Sales, Book Sales and a

virtual reindeer run. Recently they held a bake sale to help them add to their £4,800 total as they get closer to their target of £5,000 – this is a fantastic achievement.

The Little Things

In February, the English faculty had the pleasure of delivering Andy Craven-Griffith's writing workshop focusing on 'The Little Things'. Our aim was to encourage our school community to remember the smaller, brilliant things we still have in our lives and we were so pleased to read and share such lovely words from our pupils. The workshop followed a simple step by step process and allowed pupils from all year groups to engage, reflect and feel proud of what they produced. It was clear from the finished poems that the pupils had not only found it a valuable writing experience but that the art of showing gratitude, had the ability to boost their mood too.

Pupils represent TSS in National Competition

Three lucky winners were chosen to represent TSS in the national round of the Tunnock's Teacakes competition run by the Food Teachers Centre. To gain their well-deserved place they were challenged to present a Tunnock's Teacake to the theme of 'Teacake Travels Around the World'. Ideas were to reflect tradition, sights, smells, tastes of the chosen country or culture. The judging criteria was based on, presenting a stunning dish, creativity, skills and the use of ethically sourced ingredients. The results of the national final will be released soon.

Drama pupils perform solo

Monologues as Mary Queen of Scots; a teen who had outgrown a best friend; an experience of serendipity. These were just some of the excellent solo performances our drama pupils showcased over lockdown. Challenged to perform solo, the panel of judges were treated to different skills showcased by our exceptionally talented pupils who love to perform.

World Book Day

This year's World Book Day was a little different from our usual assemblies, quizzes, competitions, book clues and staff props but we can still remind ourselves about the importance of reading and celebrate books that have been important to us. Lots of resources and information was placed online, members of staff shared mini book reviews as part of their live lessons and pupils were sent a £1 book token.

Pupil takes part in the Young Writers' Festival

Ben, Year 9 was put forward with other young writers to take part in the special showcase event, where nine aspiring writers performed their own pieces, receiving personalised feedback from best-selling YA author and poet Dean Atta. Ben delivered his piece with confidence, Dean was very impressed and said 'Well done Ben, gosh that piece was terrifying! There were so many moments there, where I could picture it so vividly, your descriptions were incredible!

E is for Engineering

Running for the second year at TSS the 'E is for Engineering' project, run as part of the Universities STEM outreach programme, which is to encourage more females to consider a career in Engineering, delivered two workshops to our Year 7 and Year 8 girls.

Pupil video to be used by local businesses

Mr Green, Leader of STEM at TSS was approached by the Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering (AME) and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) board of directors and was asked to carry out some research into the current issue of, the lack of females taking STEM related subjects (D&T, Engineering, Computer Science, Physics and Maths) at GCSE and A level. As well as pupil and parent surveys he filmed a question and answer session with five Year 11 girls which was presented to over fifteen engineering and manufacturing businesses. Due to their confident performance and exceptional answers it has brought into questions how some of the businesses may make changes to improve and encourage recruitment into the industry. They were also very eager to share the video with their workforces to promote STEM.

Yours sincerely



Ian Morrel

Headteacher