

From: D J Harrison MA (Cantab)
Headmaster



SEDBERGH
SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1525

20 November 2020

Dear Parents

This has been a most extraordinary week as we have undertaken the process of testing the entire School community for Covid-19; the purpose of this letter is to provide you with an update of the current situation and the plan for the coming weeks.

We have worked closely with the National Institute for Health Protection (formerly PHE) to systematically test all pupils and all staff. The scale of this operation was remarkable and the way in which your sons and daughters approached this was commendable. The results show that we had 149 positive cases amongst the pupils who took the test, this represents 28% of the whole School. None of the results received from this week's testing of staff have returned positive tests, we await the remaining results. The number of pupils who tested positive is a clear concern but we are pleased that results received indicate staff have been able to avoid infection and give us confidence in this area of our Covid protection measures, and confidence that there is a low risk of spread into the wider local community.

The consequence of these results is that all those pupils who have tested positive, and those in a bubble with a positive case, have returned home unless it is inappropriate for them to do so. A number of other pupils have returned home for individual reasons. We have restructured the Houses and our pastoral care to support those at home and the pupils who remain at School. Online learning has started for all our pupils and once again they have adapted easily to this and are busy maintaining academic progress. Meanwhile, we have reviewed and adapted our social distancing and cleaning processes to reflect the new situation.

We will continue our online teaching provision until at least December 1st by which time the majority of pupils will be able to return to school. Please do liaise directly with Assistant Housemasters/Housemistresses to discuss individual arrangements.

This period of separation will do much to bring the spread of infection under control and we must do everything possible to prevent any further introduction of the virus into the School. In order to achieve this **parents should please note the following:**

UK Parents

Cumbria County Council public health officials have authorised every pupil who has not returned a positive test to be tested before return. This should be arranged via the national portal: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or if you do not have internet access, by calling 119. When booking online, when prompted, "Why are you asking for a test?" ensure you tick the following the option that says "My local council has asked me (or someone I live with) to get a test, even though I do not have symptoms." This exception to national policy has been authorised because Sedbergh is a boarding School. Please register the result to the address: covid@sedberghschool.org, we will confirm safe receipt and allow their return to school in due course. Pupils who have tested positive should not be tested a second time.

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Overseas Parents

We have arranged a Q&A webinar specifically for overseas parents which will take place on Monday November 30th at 9.30am and 5.30pm. The webinar will be an opportunity for you to ask any questions regarding the end of term, remote learning and plans for returning in January. Questions can be submitted in advance to david.milner@sedberghschool.org or via the chat function during the webinar.

First webinar is at 9.30am – register here

- https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wUfMMpckTzCgtAZNfzNSQ

Second webinar is at 5.30pm – register here

- https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_o_YX0E38SzqS7yBGQFicqQ

These steps will allow us to recommence teaching in person for the final two weeks of term during which we will reintroduce the co-curricular programme and celebrate the commencement of Christmas fully. For any pupil who will not be able to join us physically from December 1st, we will continue to provide resources, learning and engagement through Microsoft Teams.

For parents of pupils in Year 11, I am sure you will understand our rationale for postponing the GCSE mock exams until the week beginning January 25th. Year 13 mocks will remain as scheduled, in February. I will write to all parents in the next few weeks about plans for the next term.

Throughout this whole process, your sons and daughters have been magnificent and have coped with the disruption in a very Sedberghian manner. You should be very proud. I would also like to thank all of you for your unfailing support in these difficult times.

With very best wishes

Yours sincerely



Dan Harrison

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