



Headteacher
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13 November 2020

Dear Parent/ Carer

On behalf of the School, I would like to thank you for your support of the decision to close the School for a deep clean at such short notice. Your patience and positive comments, alongside the extremely high student engagement with the remote learning, is a testament to the resilience and strength that lie at the heart of the community that we serve.

After extensive consultation with Governors, the Local Authority and Public Health England, the School has decided to extend the period of closure to Friday 20 November. **Students will return to School on Monday 23 November at the usual times [unless you have received a Close Proximity letter which specifies the date of return]**. Student and staff safety remains our highest priority and is at the forefront of every decision we make.

The closure will provide an eleven-day interruption to the transmission of the virus within our community. Furthermore, it will allow the School to operate safely, given the increasing numbers of staff who are being asked to self-isolate for 14 days. Next week, the majority of lessons will be delivered over Microsoft Teams to all Year Groups. The School will be closed for the calendared staff training day on Friday 20 November.

Public Health England have provided the School with data that shows there are higher levels of COVID-19 household transmission in the Heston and Cranford Area, than the rest of the Borough. These figures have remained stubbornly high for several weeks. To support our community, in addition to the deep clean, the School is taking the following actions:

- All students will be provided with a single reusable mask upon their return to School
- The wearing of masks by students will now be **compulsory** in all lessons as well as all communal areas
- Our approach to the teaching of Dance, Drama and Physical Education will limit face to face interaction
- Additional signage will be introduced to remind students of how to keep everyone in the community safe
- On Monday 23 November we will provide additional lessons to educate students on their responsibilities and the actions they must take to support our community in its fight against COVID-19.

I would also like to remind all families, but especially those with children in KS4 and KS5, how their actions impact others in our community. Meeting up with friends and relatives has been confirmed as the greatest risk factor, contributing to the current high numbers of reported COVID-19 cases – almost 50,000 people were confirmed positive on Friday 13 November. The level of interaction between households needs to be dramatically reduced.

 **Specialist Visual Arts Academy**

We strongly urge all parents to be vigilant and not to send their child into School if they, or anyone in the family, are experiencing any of the COVID-19 symptoms. Failure to follow the guidance attached with this letter puts all our community at risk. Whilst it is disappointing that the School has had to take these actions, we believe they are necessary and proportionate to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our School community.

Best wishes to you and your family.

Yours faithfully

M. O'Hagan.

M O'Hagan
Deputy Headteacher

