

29th September 2020



Wendy Walters BA (Hons) MA
Academy Principal

Chatham Grammar
Rainham Road
Chatham
Kent
ME5 7EH

T : 01634 851262
E : OfficeCG@universityofkentacademiestrust.org.uk
W : www.chathamgrammar.org.uk

A University of Kent Academies Trust School

Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Update on COVID 19 UKAT protocols

It is very clear that the current situation will be with us all for many months, so it is important that our students and their families are clear about the protocols which we have in place across the Trust. I hope that the outline below provides a useful and comprehensive overview of our plans and will reassure and help to allay any concerns.

I also wish to emphasise here that, as parents and carers, you play a vital part in helping us to protect our students and staff. Our plans function better with your input and so, please may I ask you to make sure that you call the main office of the academy your child attends immediately to let us know:

- If your child has exhibited symptoms which might be COVID-19
- The outcome of any visit to your GP to confirm a COVID result or an alternative diagnosis
- If your child is taking/waiting for a test for COVID-19
- In the event of a COVID test being taken, the outcome (whether positive OR negative) of that test

Siblings of students who have exhibited COVID-like symptoms should also remain at home until the sick child has a negative test result or is diagnosed with an illness other than COVID-19. At this point, siblings may, of course, return to the academy. By keeping us informed, you are providing us with the facts and helping us to reduce unhelpful, and often unnecessarily worrying, speculation amongst members of the wider Trust community and, inevitably, on social media. I cannot overstate the importance of this assistance and thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

The following information outlines how we at UKAT will deal with the situation where a student within our community tests positive for COVID-19. By sharing this information, I hope that you will feel better informed and understand that there are steps that we, as a Trust, must follow, in conjunction with government agencies to protect against the spread of the virus. Please note that there will be a time-lag whilst we undertake Steps 2, 3 and 4 below, so it is very possible that, as a precaution, we may have to ask a larger number of students to self-isolate initially. When we have a clearer picture, students who have not had significant close contact may be able to return to school.

The sequence of events will be:

1. The Trust is informed that a student has tested positive for COVID-19.
2. The Trust then calls the Department for Education helpline which connects us with a dedicated NHS advice team for schools with a confirmed COVID-19 case. These advisors

will confirm what action is needed, based on the latest Public Health England advice and will work with us through a risk assessment to identify close contacts.

3. Staff will collate names of all students who are deemed to have been in close contact with the sick student.

4. We will also contact the family of the COVID-positive student to discuss further who their close contacts have been while on site or travelling to the academy. This will involve talking through their day and discussing friendship groups and other social interactions.

We will contact all families with children who fit the above criteria and will ask them to self-isolate. GDPR regulations prevent us from sharing the identity of any student who has tested positive. All students who are required to self-isolate will need to remain at home. Please be aware that this will, of necessity, happen very quickly and so we advise our students to be prepared and to take home their books each day. Remote learning for all students who are self-isolating, but asymptomatic will start immediately. All potentially infected areas of academy will be subject to enhanced cleaning and fogging.

We will communicate with all our families at the earliest opportunity to update them on our actions and we ask that you wait for this formal communication from us, so that you have the facts. Informal, and possibly inaccurate, information will, inevitably circulate but will do nothing to help our careful planning and may even hinder or jeopardise desired outcomes.

Just to update you, after following the process above, we have been able to isolate the students who had close contact with the confirmed COVID students in Year 9, 12 and 13. They will continue to self-isolate for a period of 14 days, whilst the remainder of Years 9, 12 and 13 are returning to the academy tomorrow.

Just a reminder that due to the COVID measures we have put in place it is essential that your child does not arrive on site before 8am. This is because the enhanced COVID cleaning regimes have to be completed. However, as the weather is deteriorating, students will now be able to enter the building and go directly to the classrooms from 8am onwards.

Finally, I do want to thank you all for your continuing support for all we are doing at UKAT to keep your children and our staff healthy, happy and safe. We appreciate that, should we need to implement any of the above measures, it may be frustrating for families, but I am sure that we all understand the need for them and I thank you in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely



Wendy Walters
Principal

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRIVACY

From time to time we may use your personal information to communicate newsletters or marketing information about events, products and services offered by the school which we feel are relevant to you. We will communicate marketing information to you on the basis of "legitimate interest" due to your current relationship with the school. You will find further information about how we use your personal information in our Data Privacy Notice by visiting <http://www.chathamgirlsgrammar.medway.sch.uk/privacy-parents/>. Should you wish to opt out of receiving these communications at any time you can do so by contacting the school office via email: officeCG@universityofkentacademiestrust.org.uk