



CHRIST THE KING

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

WITH THE POWER TO ACT

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Headteacher: Mrs E Wheeler BSc (Hons)

EWR/PG

1 February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Covid-19 - New South African Variant

You may have heard the news today that the South African variant of Covid-19 has been detected in Sefton, specifically within the PR9 postcode.

Additional testing for the new South African variant of Covid-19 will now be starting in the area.

Dedicated test sites for the new variant will be set up and we would encourage all of our families over the age of 16 to be tested as soon as possible, even though they don't have symptoms. This will help us find any cases of the new variant and help stamp it out.

At the moment we have no evidence to suggest that this variant is any more severe than others, but in order to suppress any onward spread of the virus extra testing is going to be conducted for anyone living in the PR9 postcode area. For schools, including those in the PR9 postcode, this means doing all the things we have been doing as identified in our risk assessments.

Sefton Council and its partners are still working out exactly how the additional tests are going to take place in the light of today's announcement, but comprehensive testing has been in place across the Borough since April. This has been through a combination of pop-up mobile test units at various sites and permanent walk-through testing sites for people with Coronavirus symptoms and three SMART test centres for people with no symptoms.

It seems this new variant can still be combated through vaccination although it could be more transmissible, which means it could spread more quickly

Sefton are asking as many people as possible in the target postcodes to get tested, even if they don't have symptoms, so that they can find any cases of the new variant and help suppress it.

The more cases of the variant we find, the better chance we have at suppressing it. Please help to keep your community safe by getting tested so we can find the variant and protect you and your loved ones.

The message is to continue to follow the national regulations. This means staying at home except for essential purposes such as shopping for essential supplies, going to work if we can't do so from home and providing care. It also means maintaining at least two metres' distancing, wearing a mask or face covering while out and

about and washing our hands frequently. If you test positive by any method, you must isolate to stop the spread of the virus.

We therefore implore you once again to KEEP YOUR CHILDREN AT HOME IF THERE IS AN ADULT IN THE HOUSE, EVEN IF YOUR ARE WORKING FROM HOME, and not send them to school. This will help to keep the virus under control, especially with this new variant detected in our area.

Please contact school if you will now be keeping your child at home tomorrow to suppress this new variant. Any staff and pupils from the PR9 area who come into school will be tested for Covid-19 before entry into school as a precaution.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together as a school community to work together to keep safe. We will update you with further information as it becomes available.

Further information and a range of FAQs can be found at <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/covid-19-in-sefton/>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E. Wheeler". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mrs E Wheeler
HEADTEACHER