

14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Families

We are almost at the end of a challenging fortnight in terms of keeping our students/young people and staff safe in school and college. Thank you all for your patience and support as we have tried to get to a point where we feel we are doing as much as we can.

As we all know, cases across the North East and, particularly in Hartlepool, are very high. We also know that the new variant of the virus is 50-70% more transmissible than the first strain. Schools and colleges have not suddenly become unsafe, however, the Government have said that 'limiting the number of children and students who attend them is essential to curb the escalating cases of Coronavirus'. Reduced attendance is helping to minimise the number of contacts that all of us have with other people from other households, which will reduce the likelihood of contracting the virus.

We continue to remain open to vulnerable students and students of key workers and we are supporting our families as best we can. Staff have worked incredibly hard to develop our remote learning offer to support our students/young people who are at home. Staff will continue to make weekly welfare checks so please discuss with your young person's teacher how the packs are working and to also raise any concerns that you may have.

Over the last two weeks, we have been able to set up weekly testing of staff. We have made the decision to not carry out any contact testing on staff or young people due to the results of the lateral flow test not being 100% accurate. Therefore, anyone classed as a contact of a positive case would be asked to isolate for 10 days as we deem this the safest thing to do.

We are constantly reviewing Government guidance alongside the R rate within Hartlepool and our neighbouring towns, which is informing our ongoing risk assessments. We will keep families updated with any changes.

Thank you again for your support and as always stay safe.



Mrs Greig  
Interim CEO