



From the Headmaster: Weekly Update – 28/01/22

Dear Parents

The number of pupils who have been isolating at Colfe's this week has risen slightly in both parts of the school. We currently have 27 junior pupils and 15 seniors isolating and there are just two teachers, one junior and one senior, who are presently out of school due to Covid. Numbers across London have stabilised this week.

We hope very much that the government's decision to drop the Plan B restrictions will not generate a significant rise in case numbers but have to acknowledge that there is a realistic chance that it might, given that the rules on testing and isolation have not been dropped simultaneously. For that reason we will retain the use of masks on the current basis in the senior school between now and half term. Junior school pupils are not required to wear masks but I hope that those who want to will continue to do so; our policy in the junior school remains that this is a matter of parental discretion.

I appreciate that the approach to masks at Colfe's has been more cautious than elsewhere and I wish to stress that we will be delighted to relax the requirement when it becomes possible to do so without risking significant disruption to education. For it is the potential for interruption, rather than the danger of serious illness, which has become the greatest concern. On that basis, we are in a much stronger position than was the case this time last year. It is a matter of fact, however, that, any member of the school community who tests positive has to isolate at home for up to 10 days, even if they are completely asymptomatic. If that happens to teachers of GCSE or A level classes the educational impact will be significant.

And the government has confirmed repeatedly that there will be actual public examinations this summer. It has not yet been communicated what form the exams will take but announcements are imminent and we hope to know more by the 7th February. As ever, we will keep closely in contact with pupils and parents in exam year groups to ensure that preparation is as good as it can be. We will simultaneously prepare for the possibility of another year of Teacher Assessed Grades, just in case the government's confidence proves to be misplaced again.

It has been a good week for music. I was delighted to have the opportunity to attend a Year 3/Year 4 singing assembly yesterday and on Wednesday music scholars attended a wonderful piano recital in our professional concert series which we run in collaboration with the Trinity Laban Conservatoire in Greenwich. This relationship has been of immense value to Colfe's over the years and we look forward to the next event in the series.

With best wishes to all

Richard Russell
Headmaster