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Dear Parents,

A letter regarding the new arrangements for track & trace within schools was sent to you earlier today.

Within this new process, if your child is tested positive you will deal directly with PHA and they will identify with you and your child their close contacts. Those contacts will then be notified by PHA. They have indicated to schools that in limited circumstances they may need the help of school staff in getting contact details or identifying close contacts in very young children or those with communication difficulties.

Please continue to inform the school if your child has tested positive for COVID or has been identified as a close contact. For children who are close contacts, the regime of testing immediately and a follow up test on day 8 remains. Please ensure you continue to email these negative results to the office.

If I receive notification of a potential positive case then I will be directed to do nothing, other than alert parents. This is an element that runs against every instinct I have to take immediate action to keep our school safe. Therefore, I appeal to our parents. If your child tests positive on either a lateral flow test or PCR test, please keep close contacts/friendship groups/families informed. The best way to enable us all to do the right thing is when we understand the full picture.

I continue to urge extreme caution around pupils attending when a household family member has tested positive.

The days ahead will be new territory for us all. The desire to attend school should not overtake what is safe for our pupils, staff and their families, and I hope these new measures bring the benefit of keeping children in school without increasing transmission.

Thank you as always for your support & patience.

A. Gourley

EDUCATION AUTHORITY – BELFAST REGION

