Executive Headteacher Head of Schools Head Teacher 16th December 2020	Nina Dohel Director of Education Children's and Adults' Services Department 2nd Floor, Hub 5 Southwark Council PO Box 64529 London SE1P 5LX (T) (020) 7525 3252 (E) nina.dohel@southwark.gov.uk

Dear parent and carer

Re: COVID-19 Testing Update

The number of cases of Covid-19 are rising in the borough, particularly in 12-17 year olds and young adults. Your child and the people they live with can now get at test at our testing centres even if they do not have any symptoms.

There are several testing centres available in and near to Southwark, including in Burgess Park and in Peckham town centre. To book a test please visit https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test and select the 'my council has asked me to get a test' option. The website will show you the nearest site to you with availability that day.

If your child's, or another member of your household's, test comes back positive your child and your household must self-isolate for a full 10 days after the date the test was done.

Getting tested is one of the most important things you can do to keep yourself and others safe this winter, so please do take up this offer. If you decide not to get to a test, but you or someone you live with develops symptoms, you must all self-isolate and the person who is unwell should book a test. If the test comes back as positive they and the people they live with should self-isolate for a full 10 days after the day they became unwell.

Southwark Council, PO Box 64529, London, SE1P 5LX
Switchboard – 020 7525 5000   Website – www.southwark.gov.uk
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The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New cough and/or
- High temperature and/or
- A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

For most people, particularly children coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. However, if your child develops any of the symptoms listed and you are concerned please call NHS 111 for advice

Support with self-isolation

We know it can be very challenging for people to self-isolate, but help and support, including financial support, is available at www.southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/test-and-trace-support-payments

Christmas Holidays

COVID-19 is spreading quickly again in Southwark and London. We all need to play our part in stopping the virus, so together we can protect our families, friends and neighbours, and prevent more people dying this Christmas and New Year.

The number of people testing positive in Southwark has increased by 71% over the last 7 days, the fastest increase since April.

To keep us all safe Christmas will need to be different. With infections rising so fast it is very important that we all take extra care so we don't catch or pass on the virus. Please:

- **Think carefully about the best way to keep your friends and family safe**. The new rules set strict limits on how you can meet, but many people will decide that it is safer not to meet at all and to catch up by phone or over the internet this Christmas and New Year.
- **Think particularly carefully about meeting older or vulnerable relatives** who are more likely to become seriously ill if they contract COVID-19.
- **Avoid crowded places.** If you do go out and about – including for Christmas shopping – try to avoid places where you can't keep your distance from people.
- **Wear a face covering.** We all need to follow the rules on wearing them in indoor public places and on public transport but I also encourage you to wear one if you are in a busy outdoor space where you can't keep your distance
- **Reduce the number of journeys you make wherever possible**

We believe the increase in rates among older children is mostly taking place outside of school, so please remember that as well as not meeting other people inside, remember that groups of more than 6 people should not meet outdoors, for example in parks or playgrounds. Please remind your children not to meet up with groups of school friends during the holidays.

Thank you for your ongoing support in helping to keep Southwark safe.

Nina Dohel
Director of Education

Jin Lim
Director of Public Health (Interim)

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