

# Be Your Best Self

Tuesday 23rd November 2021



Dear Parents, Carers & Students,

I hope this finds you well?

We've had a great couple of weeks in school. Year 11 have nearly completed their Autumn mock examinations and the UCAS university application process is now well advanced. It all comes around so quickly. There is a great atmosphere around school and attendance across all year groups has started to climb gradually. I am writing primarily to give an update on our Covid-19 status, but also to share other key information.

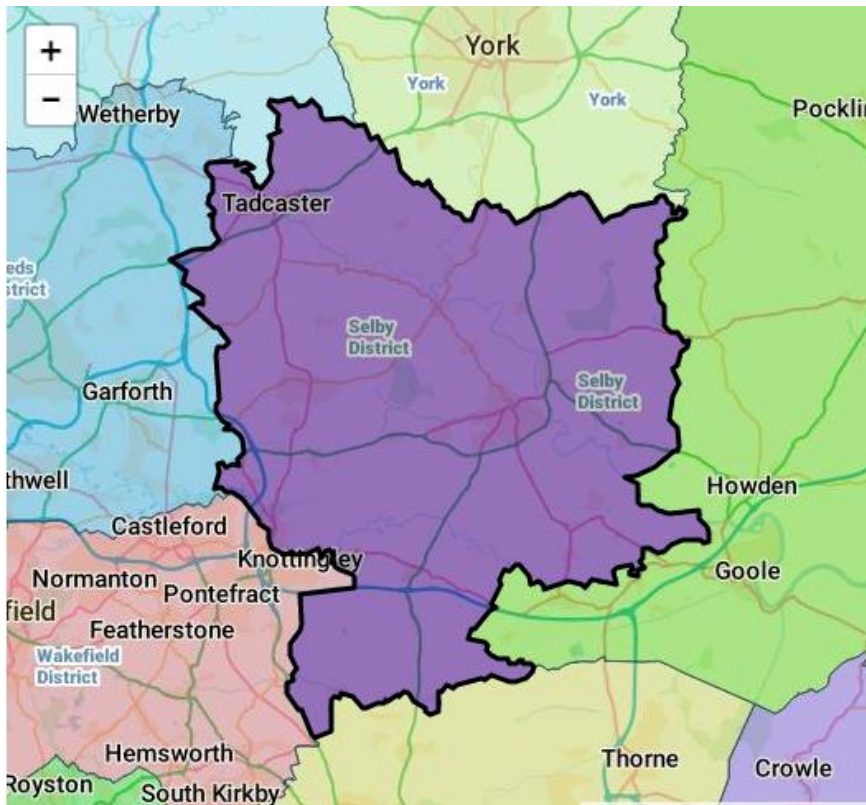
Yesterday we reviewed our current system of controls and numbers of confirmed positive Covid-19 cases in the school community with the North Yorkshire Public Health Team. As a result, we will be extending the time that students and staff are required to wear a face covering in classrooms, communal areas and on shared student transport until at least the last day of term, Friday 17th December 2021 as a precautionary measure.

In addition, we will be continuing to work in accordance with Public Health advice by:

- Reinforcing the importance of good hand and respiratory hygiene;
- Maximising ventilation in classrooms and other shared spaces (whilst allowing students to wear outdoor clothing if required);
- Limiting visitors to the school;
- Minimising large student gatherings;
- Dynamically assessing whether educational trips and residential visits should go ahead.

According to the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire and Director of Children and Young People's Service, Covid-19 infections were very high in the Selby District (see map) as of last Friday. The rate was 685.3 cases per 100,000, which is the highest rate of COVID-19 seen in the district since

the start of the pandemic. The Selby rate is significantly higher than other North Yorkshire districts and is 287 per 100,000 higher than the national average.



Staff absence due to Covid-19 related issues is still very much a feature of our day to day experience in school. Our staff continue to be amazing by volunteering to plan for and cover absent classes, often at very short notice. Schools nationally are continuing to face significant challenges accessing supply staff through agencies; quality temporary staffing is simply not available at the point of need in a sustainable way. When we have a long term teacher absence, we will always prioritise relentlessly trying to secure high quality, subject

specialist cover staff, often at premium rates, to ensure continuity of education. The most proactive strategy we can all use to ensure students and staff are not off school is to minimise Covid-19 transmission through wearing face coverings and weekly asymptomatic testing.

### Covid-19 Control Measures In School

Our key priority is to work within the bounds of the current government guidance for schools to ensure all students and staff are safe and supported whilst ensuring the school stays fully open.

#### HOW FAMILIES CAN SUPPORT THE SCHOOL TO REMAIN FULLY OPEN

##### Face Coverings

Please note that we will be continuing to strongly support the wearing of face coverings in school (in communal areas, classrooms and on shared school transport) until at least **Friday 17th December 2021** (unless exempt).

##### Home COVID-19 Testing

Asymptomatic Covid-19 lateral flow device testing should continue at home on a Wednesday and Sunday evening. Positive results should be reported immediately via the school website [HERE](#).

Following a positive PCR result please email [attendance@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:attendance@tgs.starmat.uk) with the date your child can return to school. This date is the one that track and trace inform you when your child can come out of self isolation.

Thank you as always for your continued support of the school.

Kind regards,

**Andrew Parkinson**  
**Headteacher**

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### **Year 9 Options**

Although September 2022 may seem like a long way off, the process by which Year 9 students select their option subjects for Key Stage 4 begins shortly. This is the first time in a young person's journey through their school years that they will actually choose what they are taught, and also which subjects they will no longer study. It is vital therefore that students make the right decisions, and the more information they are provided with, the better. Over the coming weeks, I will be writing to you with full details of the process, and students will be provided with details of the wide range of courses we offer. The subject selection process will commence as soon as we return after the Christmas break, with a deadline of 11th February 2022. Please can I suggest that you discuss this with your child(ren), encourage them to start thinking about their subject choices, and ensure that they read all of the information we will be providing. Many thanks for your support with this.

**M Dunphy**  
**Assistant Headteacher**  
m.dunphy@tgs.starmat.uk

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### **Sixth Form**

Applications are now open to Year 11 to apply to our Sixth Form. [APPLY HERE](#) We would be delighted to welcome our fantastic Year 11 students back into school in September 2022 to start their sixth form studies under our care.

We are excited that we have been able to reschedule the Year 11 post 16 taster day to Thursday 2nd December. Students will be able to try all the subjects available to them in Sixth Form to get an experience of the excellent provision available here at TGS. Early next term students will also get another opportunity to speak to our current Sixth Form students about their experience of Sixth Form life.

**Ms R Knapton**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

[r.knapton@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:r.knapton@tgs.starmat.uk)

## **Christmas Jumper Day**

What better way to tuck in to your Christmas dinner than styled in the most festive Christmas woolly! Yes, our annual celebration of a Christmas school lunch, with all the trimmings, will be served on **Tuesday 14th December** and students are invited to raise money for charity on this non-school uniform day by wearing a Christmas jumper, if they choose.

This year, all proceeds will go to a local charity, dear to the school's heart, [Martin House Hospice](#), for the care and support it has given to some of our students with life-limiting conditions, as well as their siblings who attend TGS, and their families. Prior to this charity event, our students will learn, during their tutor time, about Martin's House Hospice, which relies almost entirely on donations and fundraising to provide end of life care for children and incredible support for families in their bereavement.

We suggest a voluntary donation of at least £1 but we are hoping that by learning more about this invaluable charity, at this time of year when giving is so important, that we will raise much needed funds. We welcome your generous support. (Payment details to follow)

**Mrs M Carroll**

**Assistant Headteacher**

[m.carroll@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:m.carroll@tgs.starmat.uk)

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## **Summer 2021 Examination Certificates**

Examination certificates will be available for collection from the school imminently. We need to organise how to do this in a Covid-19 safe way and will be communicating with parents and students of the Year 11 & Year 13 classes of 2021 to arrange collection.

**Ms C Langford-Smith**

**Examinations Officer**

[c.langford-smith@tgs.starmat.uk](mailto:c.langford-smith@tgs.starmat.uk)

