



# Jeppe High School for Boys

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21st June 2021

Dear Jeppe parents,

I trust that your boys all enjoyed a much-needed break last week and that the time away from school was well utilised and appreciated. With only three weeks left of the term, the focus for these remaining weeks will be largely on the preparation for the upcoming two-week test block, starting next Monday, 28th June.

Since my last letter on Friday, 11th June, the rate of infection and number of COVID-positive cases in the country, and in Gauteng in particular, has continued to increase exponentially. I'm sure that each and every Jeppe family has, by now, been either directly or indirectly affected by this third wave of the virus. From a school perspective, as of this afternoon, we have 16 positive cases amongst the boys with eight of these cases having been reported during the period since last Wednesday when the school was physically closed.

An ancillary benefit of the school having been closed since last Wednesday is that the last day that boys who subsequently tested positive were at school was Tuesday, 15th June (with a number of them last being at school on Friday, 11th June). In addition, upon investigation, in the vast majority of cases the source of infection has either been through a family member testing positive or via community exposure, and that within-school transmission remains extremely infrequent.

From an educator perspective, two educators and one support staff member are currently positive - none of whom have been at school since last Monday (14th) - whilst an additional four educators are in quarantine due to family members testing positive or coming into close contact with a positive case.

The confirmation of the planned vaccination of the education sector within the next three weeks is extremely promising and we await further details and the logistical implications thereof from the Department of Education. We do not, however, foresee this process impacting on teaching time or classroom lessons.

With the mid-year test block starting next week Monday, all boys should, by now, have begun their revision programme and be immersed in their studies. Boys were spoken to today, in their individual grades, regarding examination procedures and the arrangements for the catching up of assessments missed due to testing positive or being in isolation. The importance of limiting social interactions and out-of-school activities was also, once again, emphasised to the boys.

Whilst acknowledging the unique medical circumstances of certain families, it remains my opinion that schools are safe places for the boys and it remains true that the overwhelming majority of infections are occurring as a result of exposure in the community. That being said, the rising infections are undoubtedly leading, understandably, to heightened concern and anxiety within the greater community. It is more important than ever

*Turning **black** and **white** into **gold***

to remain vigilant and careful in the coming weeks, observing the various guidelines and taking all the necessary steps to protect ourselves and those around us. This is certainly the approach we are adopting at school as we look to prioritise the safety of staff and boys, whilst ensuring the continuation of the academic programme and the minimising of any disruption related thereto.

I would like to once again thank you all for your ongoing support and understanding in these complex and difficult times. As always, we keep those families who have been so sadly affected by the pandemic, and those currently facing challenges, in our thoughts and prayers.

Yours in health and education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dale Jackson', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

**Dale Jackson**  
**HEADMASTER**