

1<sup>st</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

### **COVID-19 measures for the beginning of the Autumn Term 2021**

I hope that you have all enjoyed a restful and relaxing summer holiday. As restrictions have lifted in wider society and in line with Step 4 of the government road map, we have received operational guidance from the DfE which will be implemented from next Monday. I have outlined below what this guidance means for pupils who attend the academy.

#### **COVID-19 symptoms**

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above, even if your symptoms are mild, stay at home and arrange to have a test.

The guidance states that, *'If anyone arrives at your school or develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, you should send them home and they should follow public health advice. If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil.'*

Pupils, staff and other adults should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine).

#### **Close contacts and isolation**

Schools only needed to conduct contact tracing up to and including 18 July. Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and schools will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. As such, the academy will not be providing any notification regarding confirmed or suspected cases unless requested to do so by the NHS as part of this approach. Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. Close contacts identified by NHS Test and Trace should continue to attend school as normal unless advised otherwise.

#### **Asymptomatic testing**

Pupils will be encouraged to take part in the asymptomatic testing programme. This will take the form of two on-site tests from the beginning of term in September, followed by twice-weekly testing at home. Staff will also continue to test twice-weekly at home. Those who have previously consented to this programme do not need to do so again –

parents/carers of all new pupils need to complete the consent form below. We also recommend, if possible, that pupils take a home test prior to joining us to minimize the chances of any asymptomatic pupils coming onto the academy site.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=pcSK2pNmsUSs19U3AUCJaO3jlkw5uv5AaONyRXMWLxUMU4wSEIQR0YxTkUWEVTQjRDQTQxWIE2WS4u>

### **Mixing and bubbles**

It is no longer necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). This means that bubbles will not need to be used from the autumn term. As well as enabling more flexibility in curriculum delivery, this also means that more extra-curricular activities can begin from September. In addition to this, whole school assemblies can resume, and pupils are able to mix during break and lunchtimes.

### **Face coverings**

Face coverings are no longer required in school, however, those who wish to continue wearing face coverings will be able to do so and will not be treated any differently from those choosing not to. We will be expecting pupils to treat one another with respect regardless of their preferences in this area.

### **Hygiene**

The school will continue to encourage hand washing/sanitising – sanitisers in classrooms and at entry points to the academy will stay in place and will continue to be topped up regularly. We will also continue with the additional efforts to maintain clean and safe areas including additional cleaning in high contact areas and of equipment that is used by more than one person throughout the day.

### **Ventilation**

Good ventilation has been shown to have a significant impact on how easily the virus is transmitted, therefore, we will continue to have good ventilation throughout the academy with windows and doors staying open. As such, pupils are recommended to wear a coat over their school uniform as the weather cools, and will be permitted to keep them on in lessons when it is deemed necessary.

### **Attendance**

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school. In the rare event that a pupil will need to self-isolate following advice from NHS Test and Trace, a code X will be applied which will not reduce attendance percentages.

While the measures above are correct at the time of writing, we are aware that the national and regional picture can change regularly. As such, we may need to make changes to them if advised to do so.

We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead and of course to welcoming all pupils on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Yours sincerely

Alice Corrigan  
Principal