

Dear Parent / Carer

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Letter from the Headteacher

Executive Principal: Miss JK Tomlinson

As we come to the end of a very busy half term, I wanted to start this update by taking the opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of the academy.

Our return in September was a huge boost for both pupils and staff with a return to some level of normality, albeit with some caution remaining in relation to the pandemic managed by our on-going risk assessment procedures and revised operational plans. I have to say, I have been overwhelmed by the positive start to the year that our pupils have made, and the way that the vast majority of children in general have come into school each morning with such enthusiasm for learning.

You will be aware from the media that the pandemic continues to dominate the national agenda, and we also continue our vigilance in this respect. As an academy we continue to follow all national guidance in terms of the control measures we should have in place, and to date this has been operated effectively in order to mitigate risk and ensure that rates of infection are managed whilst both pupils and staff are on site. Alongside national guidance, Wakefield Local Authority have also released further guidance to schools for consideration after half term and the following sets out this guidance and where our current arrangements sit in terms of our risk assessment and outbreak management plan.

The guidance released by Wakefield Local Authority that already forms part of our current risk assessment and operational plan is as follows:

- To ensure wherever possible that windows / doors remain open in classrooms and social spaces to facilitate good ventilation.
- To reduce mixing between year groups and classrooms as much as is possible in the context of maintaining the best possible educational provision and safety of pupils.
- To wherever possible and appropriate, suspend whole school or year group events and restrict the number of visitors to site in large groups.
- To carefully consider whether all trips and residential activities should go ahead.

In addition to the above, Wakefield Local Authority have also asked schools and academies to consider some other measures **that do not currently form part of the national guidance** based on infection rates within each school setting and within the local area as follows:

- Consideration be given to advise pupils to stay at home if someone has tested positive in the household for Covid-19 (on an LFD or PCR test), and if they develop symptoms to get a PCR test straight away. Where they do not have symptoms, to get a PCR test 3-5 days after their household member started with symptoms (or took their test if they had no

symptoms). If this test is negative, the child can return to school but must stay at home and arrange another test if they go on to develop symptoms. Some children are exempt from this advice:

- 12–16-year-olds who have had at least one dose of the vaccine more than 14 days ago
- Any child aged between 5 – 16 who has tested positive for COVID-19 via a PCR test within the past 90 days.

This is not currently a measure in place within our risk assessment and operational plan, however it is now included in our outbreak management plan as a potential measure should there be a surge in case rates amongst the academy and / or local community.

On top of the measures that schools are being asked to consider, Wakefield Local Authority has also asked parents / carers to consider the following:

1. Continue to support your child to undertake lateral flow testing twice a week if they attend a secondary school.
2. Consideration of your child wearing a face covering if they attend secondary school, both in school and in enclosed indoor spaces in public.
3. Consider carefully the benefits of the vaccination programme for children between the ages of 12-15.
4. If you or your child develop symptoms of COVID-19 you should book a free NHS test as soon as possible (www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). You can also phone 119. Stay at home until it is time to take your test.

I hope this letter provides an update on our position following the Wakefield Local Authority guidance. I will continue to keep you updated should there be any changes to our risk assessment and / or operational plans.

I wish you and your families a restful half term break.

Yours sincerely,



Miss JK Tomlinson
Headteacher