



Wellfield Academy

Executive Headteacher Mrs L Gwinnett
Head of School Mr J Lewis

Tuesday 4th January 2022

Dear Parents and Students,

Start of Term & COVID Updates

As you receive this, we hope that your families and all within our local community are well and that you had a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas break. As anticipated and highlighted in our end of term letter before Christmas, we have received further updates and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on Sunday 2nd January. Therefore, we write to summarise this guidance and to provide an update regarding changes to the start of term.

Start of Term Changes

Our original intention was for students to return to school on Wednesday 5th January following a staff INSET day on Tuesday 4th. However, as we have seen both locally and nationally a significant rise in transmission rates and positive COVID cases, we are reluctant to proceed with the initial plan to test students once they had already started to mix with others on site. We have, therefore, made the decision to reschedule our INSET day until later in the term (date to be confirmed) to allow us to use Tuesday 4th for planning and COVID updates with our staff. **Wednesday 5th January** will now involve staggered testing (see below) before students return to school fully on **Thursday 6th January, 8.40am**.

Testing Arrangements

Students should attend school on Wednesday 5th January only at the times highlighted below to complete their on-site LFD test before they return home. They should enter the school site by the sports hall and sign in before completing their test. Once completed, students will be allowed to leave the school site and will therefore not be expected to wait in school for their test result. All students, unless exempt, should also wear a face covering. [There will be no remote learning set for students on this day.?](#)

In the event of a positive COVID test result, contact will be made with parents to inform your child. If no contact is made, you should assume that the test result is negative.

- **9.00-10.00am** Year 7
- **10.00-11.00am** Year 8
- **11.00-12noon** Year 9
- **12.00-1.00pm** Year 10
- **1.00-2.00pm** Year 11

To support parents, we are happy to support siblings in different year groups attending at the same time, for example. Likewise, if transport is an issue and your son/daughter is unable to attend at the time slot above, we will support with testing at an alternative time slot if possible.



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Please be aware that the DfE advice is that students should complete a test on the school site in addition to regular testing at home. Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site.

Face Coverings

The advice from before the Christmas period regarding wearing masks in communal areas and school buses has since been extended by the DfE to recommending face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in Year 7 and above are educated. This was, however, something we had implemented prior to the break and we were extremely impressed with the response of the vast majority of our students. Please remember that students are encouraged to bring their own mask into school on a daily basis and, unless exemption is requested by a parent, all students will be expected to wear the masks provided.

Self Isolation/ Close Contact Guidance

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason. This means that students may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and your son/daughter does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of selfisolation.

Remote Learning

Whilst our priority is to keep our school open for all children, the high rates of COVID also continues to affect our staff, too. We currently have a number who are isolating which creates significant challenges with continuing to operate as a school day to day. Like many schools, we also face issues with sourcing supply teachers. Please be aware that, should we continue to see a rise in cases amongst our staff, we may need to make the decision to revert to remote learning as a last resort. Our intention would be to ensure Year 11 and Year 7 are prioritised for in school education as much as possible, should we need to revert to remote learning. We will, however, endeavour to give parents as much notice as possible if our staffing issues persist and we will be working closely again with students during this week to prepare them for any period of remote learning.

On-Site Provision

If a period of remote learning is required, we will ensure that there is on-site provision for some students. This includes SEND students, children of critical workers and those who are classified as vulnerable. The most recent DfE update has provided further information regarding those who should be prioritised for onsite provision so we will be spending some time over the next two days working through this information to identify all students. Should you feel that your child, for whatever reason, should be considered for onsite provision during any period of remote learning, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Similarly, all other questions and queries should be sent to enquiries@wellfieldacademy.org.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Lewis

Head of School