



Wednesday 30th June 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Parental Update Letter

We are now fast approaching the end of the academic year during which we have been rather fortunate with regards to the small number of positive COVID cases amongst the school community. Although there have been a number of students isolating at various times throughout the year, our rigorous procedures within the risk assessment have helped to reduce the impact on transmission within school overall and, in turn, ensure students are able to still attend school.

Whilst this remains the case at the time of writing this letter, we have faced increased challenges over recent weeks with regards to staff absence. Unfortunately, we are now in a situation where we have a number of our staff, both teaching and support staff, who are self-isolating. This is not as a result of contact with a positive case within school but, instead, colleagues are isolating for a number of reasons including contact from track and trace, some have developed symptoms and awaiting a PCR test result, family members have developed symptoms and awaiting a PCR test result or that their child's school bubble has resulted in self isolation. Recently, we have been managing staff absence by covering internally as much as possible and, although it has been difficult, the staff and students have been excellent. Where we have been further stretched, we have been forced to utilise external staff to cover lessons; something we have avoided as much as possible due to availability and other associated health and safety reasons.

Staffing numbers have further decreased today meaning that, in order to maintain the highest standards and quality of education, as well as ensuring all of our students are sufficiently safeguarded, we have made the decision to revert to remote learning for Year 9 and 10 in the short term (see below). Whilst we appreciate this is far from ideal, we know that students in both year groups have a higher level of independence with regards to remote learning and we are hoping it will be a short term measure before allowing them to return to school fully from Monday 5th July.

Important details

- **Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd July:**
All Year 9 and 10 students to complete remote learning
All Year 7 and 8 students expected in school
- **Monday 5th July:** All students in Years 7-10 in school

Whilst we are hopeful that all students will be in school from Monday 5th July, we will need to continue to review our staffing situation on a daily basis, including over the weekend. If the situation has not sufficiently improved, we will make the decision for students in Year 7 and 8 to complete remote learning on Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th July. We would ask that parents prepare for this as a possibility and, whilst we will endeavour to communicate this decision as soon as possible, we are sure you will appreciate that the current situation is changing at an hourly rate so a final decision may not be made until as late as Monday morning.

Year 9 and 10 remote learning updates

- Students have been informed of the current situation during an assembly today
- There will be provision in school for a small number of students to complete supervised remote learning. This will be provision for students with Special Educational Needs or where we feel your son/daughter would benefit from continued routine. Our staff will be contacting parents where we feel your child would benefit from this provision. However, please do contact us (enquiries@whs.lancs.sch.uk) if you feel your son/daughter should continue to attend school
- All remote learning will continue to be set through ClassCharts and accessed on Google Classroom on both days
- All students are expected to complete remote learning activities and upload for teaching staff to review
- Students in receipt of Free School Meals will be contacted separately and will still be able to access this provision
- Parents will receive a text message by 10am each day if your child has not yet logged onto ClassCharts
- Your son/daughter should email teaching staff directly should they require any help or support
- Laptops/chromebooks are available from school should your son/daughter not have an appropriate device at home
- Contact will be made to all students/parents over the two days of remote learning

Students are able to access google classroom using their email address which is in the format forename.surname@whs.lancs.sch.uk. Their passwords are personal to them. They also have access to an email account through Microsoft 365 using the same email format forename.surname@whs.lancs.sch.uk. This will have a different password again set by the student. Should they need either of them resetting please call the school office or email enquiries@whs.lancs.sch.uk and this will be changed, please specify which account the password needs to be changed for.

Year 7 and 8 updates

- Students must continue to attend school on Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd July
- Where subject teachers may be absent from normal classes, available internal teaching staff will be used to deliver cover lessons and/or supervise remote learning within the classroom

Common symptoms

As a reminder, the most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature and/or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia). However, it is clear that the Delta variant presents other common signs and symptoms as well; headache, sore throat and runny nose are some and there are possibly gastric symptoms. If your child, or anyone in your household, develops these symptoms, your whole household must remain at home and not go to work, school or public areas. You should arrange testing for the person who has developed symptoms. When the result is known, further advice will be available. Testing can be arranged by calling 119 or via the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

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Mrs L A Gwinnett, Executive Head
Mr J Lewis, Head of School



How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things we can all do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.

We have worked together as a community and resolutely to minimise the effects of the virus and it looks like we need another push as we move towards the end of term. Thank you once again for your ongoing support and patience– we really appreciate it.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Lewis

Head of School