



Monday, 21st September

Dear Parents,

Local COVID-19 Restrictions - Update for Parents

As we begin our third full week back in school, I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how proud we have been of all our students and the calm and measured way they have all adapted to the new routines following such a prolonged period away from Wellfield High School.

Making sure that all members of our school community stay safe remains our top priority and given the ever-changing nature of the pandemic what follows is an update on how the recently announced restrictions across the North West will impact on current school measures and procedures.

These additional measures are in line with national guidance and are being imposed across all Schools in Lancashire.

From Tuesday 22nd September the following protocols will be a requirement for all students and staff:

- All students will be required to wear facemasks in all communal areas across the school. This includes corridors, toilets and dining areas when not eating. This will apply to all students except those that have an agreed exemption.
- School staff will be wearing facemasks or visors when they supervise students in communal areas.

What hasn't changed:

- Students will continue to wear masks within lesson time except those that have an agreed exemption.
- Staff will continue to wear face visors within lessons.
- Students traveling on public transport should adhere to the mandatory wearing of face coverings.

In addition to these further restrictions what follows is some advice and guidance to support you with the *frequently asked questions* (FAQs) you are sending us.

When should or shouldn't I send my child into school?

The attached [NHS information sheet](#) provides some useful guidance on how to respond as a parent with regards your child attending school and what actions you need to take under the following circumstances:

- A child having suspected COVID-19 symptoms
- A child testing positive for COVID-19
- A household member having COVID-19 symptoms
- A household member testing positive for COVID-19
- A child has been identified by the school or NHS Test and Trace as a 'close contact'

If none of the above apply and you have had no direct contact with school advising otherwise, then your child should attend school as normal. If in doubt, please contact us via enquiries@whs.lancs.sch.uk

What happens if my child gets sent home by the school?

You may be aware that across Lancashire the evidence points to increasing rates of Covid-19 transmission and with this, the possibility that in the event of a positive case of COVID-19 infection in school, students needing to be sent home.

Should our Risk Assessment protocols require students to be sent home, this is what will happen:

- Parents of the affected Year Group Bubble will be telephoned directly by the school.
- A general text will be sent confirming this, with a request that parents wait to be contacted before arranging collection.
- No student will leave the school site without parental permission being sought.
- If by the end of the school day we have been unable to contact the parent of a child who would normally walk home, they will be released from school as normal with a copy of the **DAY 1** letter.
- Any student who would normally travel home on a dedicated school bus or public transport will remain in school until collection can be arranged.
- A short **DAY 1** letter will be sent to all parents confirming that students are to remain at home until the school makes contact the following day.
- The school will follow Public Health England's guidance on *Management of single cases of confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools* and send out a **DAY 2** letter that will confirm either that:
 - (i) Your child **has been** identified as a 'close contact' of the infected case with details of what to do next and confirmation of a return to school date; or
 - (ii) Your child **has not been** identified as a 'close contact' of the infected case and should therefore return to school with the next day date given.

Please note that the school's test and trace protocols define 'close contact' as:

- Direct face to face close contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1m, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact [skin to skin]
- Extended 'proximal' close contact [within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes] with an infected individual
- Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person.

Ensuring the bio-security of our Year Group Bubbles will be central to minimizing the risk of having to send large numbers of students home, so your support in reinforcing the following important messages is much appreciated:

- Wearing masks so that they fully cover the nose and mouth
- Wearing masks whilst travelling on school or public buses for the entirety of the journey
- Ensure that masks are kept clean by storing in a Ziplock bag when not being worn and by washing them on a regular basis.

What advice can I give my child about the new restrictions on social gatherings when out of school?

The local authority, police and wider agencies are becoming increasingly concerned about the large groups of young people gathering at local shops, not adhering to social distancing, and not wearing face coverings in relevant premises.

Whilst in the case of individuals, the enforcing of restrictions on gatherings and wearing of face coverings falls to the police and not the local authority, the latter will be reminding businesses of their responsibilities in terms of risk control within their premises.

This means that your child may find themselves turned away from premises if they are failing to adhere to the requirements. There will also be closer monitoring of parks and open spaces and reporting to the police any 'hotspots' where large groups of people are gathering.

Further information on 'meeting other people' can be found here [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Meeting with others safely \(social distancing\)](#)

There is also a 'Frequently Asked Question' available [here](#)

Information about when face coverings must be worn can be found [here](#)

We would be grateful if you could support our efforts in helping to control the infection rate by discussing this information with your child.

Social distancing in school

Some parents have observed our students at unstructured time in close proximity to each other. We have made clear in our risk assessments that we will not seek to enforce social distancing in lessons or unstructured times as, along with all schools, this just isn't possible or practical.

We do have clear seating plans in lessons and we are encouraging our students to be aware of who their 'close contacts' (see above) are to enable a successful 'track and trace' but beyond this, schools are simply unable to run if true social distancing for students was attempted.

Staff will always commit to maintaining a 2 metre distance.

Social distancing to and from school

This has also been raised with us as a concern and we share this concern. We will continue to speak to students about this in school and would urge parents to do the same. It is not something that we can police but we continue to encourage good practices.

If you have particular concerns about poor or unsafe behavior whilst a child is in our school uniform, and you can identify this child, then do contact us so that appropriate action can be taken under our behavior policy. We have wonderful students at our school, but ultimately they are children and this pandemic has been very hard on them. We will work closely with them to consider their actions.

As always, any questions or queries that you might have relating to the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing enquiries@whs.lancs.sch.uk

With very best wishes,

Mr J Lewis

Head of School