



23rd October 2020

Dear Parents,

As the first half term of this academic year draws to a close, we are pleased to be able to reflect on how successfully our students have returned to school from September and because of this, share with you our plans to move things forward across the second half term.

The well-being of students and staff was always the central focus when the Trust, in the summer, was preparing for the September re-opening of schools. This remains the case as we look to further improve the daily experience of our students when they return to school for the second half of the Autumn Term.

The health and safety measures that have been put in place since September have now been reviewed to ensure that all members of our school community continue to remain vigilant and manage the risks that the virus continues to present. This is particularly important given the increased COVID-19 transmission rates at a local level over recent weeks.

The health and safety measures currently in place will continue to ensure:

- enhanced hygiene and environmental cleaning arrangements
- minimising contact within and across year group bubbles and maintaining distancing for students and physical distancing for adults.
- the wearing of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff both in classrooms and communal areas
- the requirement that staff and students who are displaying symptoms stay at home
- active engagement with the Department for Education (DfE), Public Health England (PHE) and Lancashire County Council's Local Protection Team so that the school follow's robust Test and Trace protocols in the event of positive cases in school
- students continue to wear masks both in their classroom settings and communal areas when moving inside buildings around the school.

On this last point, as promised, senior leaders have spent considerable time monitoring the impact the wearing of masks by students in the classroom has had on their learning experience and weighing this up against the effect it has had on helping reduce the transmission rates of the virus in school.

Given that Lancashire is likely to remain in the highest COVID-19 restriction tier for at least the short term and coupled with the low numbers of students that have tested positive or had to self-isolate across the school, we deem it sensible to continue with the current policy of students wearing masks (barring exemption) both in the classroom and communal spaces inside school buildings when moving around the school. This will of course be reviewed again at the end of the Autumn Term in preparation for returning to school in January 2021.

The students at Wellfield High School have been magnificent since their full return to school and have adapted superbly to the routines that will now continue to remain in place. Movement around the school has been calm and orderly with strict adherence to the requirement that classes are accompanied by their teacher at all times with students moving in single file.

Due to this rigour, the school is in a position to now confirm that after half term, teachers will be moving back into their own classrooms and away from the current model where teachers move to the students (who have largely remained in static areas), often away from their specialist areas.

Due to our students being fully on board with the wearing of masks in communal areas and moving around the site in single file, we are confident that the integrity of our Year Group bubbles will not be jeopardised. Close contact is defined as 15 minutes within 2 metres or 5 minutes within 1 metre and by moving calmly around school in the way we have established, this should not be compromised.

Our teachers are looking forward to being back in their classrooms after ½ term, with students benefitting from as close to a 'normal' curriculum experience as it is possible to get under the national pandemic circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Where you can, we hope that you will find time to rest and recharge over the ½ term break with your children and we look forward to a return on 2nd November.

This pandemic has been long and arduous in so many ways for so many people. We look ahead to a time, hopefully in the spring, when our daily routines can resume some levels of normality. In the interim we will do all we can to keep our students, staff and all our families as safe as possible, whilst also maximising the learning environment the best we can within the current restrictions. Our partnership with each other, school and parents, is vital to this and we are grateful for your ongoing support and cooperation.

If in the meantime should you have any questions regarding the content of this letter, do not hesitate to contact us via enquiries@whs.lancs.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Mr B Dunne
Executive Secondary Lead

Mr J Lewis
Head of School