

22nd October 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

As you will be aware from the letter sent to you by Wakefield Council, the COVID transmission rate within the district is currently at a high level with the number of cases of children in the 5-16 year old age range contributing most significantly to the recent increase.

Although cases within our academy are limited in number, we too have seen this increase over recent weeks and as a result we have reviewed how we will operate the academy in light of the recommendations made to all Wakefield schools by the COVID-19 Health Protection Board.

As a result of this review, the following measures will be implemented with effect of the first Monday back after half term (Monday 1st November):

Isolation guidance for household positive cases

If someone in the household has tested positive for COVID-19 (on LFD or PCR), any pupils from the household are **advised to stay at home. If they develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test straight away. If they don't have symptoms, they should 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.

Any child aged between 5 – 16 who has tested positive for COVID-19 via a PCR test within the past 90 days is exempt from this advice.

This is guidance and will be the position that the academy staff advise you off in the event of a positive case within the household, however, parents/carers who still want their child to continue to attend school have the right for them to do so. We hope that most parents and carers will understand the reasons behind the request and will feel able to support the school, especially as they will have at least one household member self-isolating at home already.

If you are not able to support the school in this request, we would still strongly advise that your child obtains a PCR test before returning to school. Daily lateral flow tests could also be considered, but please be aware that these tests do not have the same degree of accuracy when detecting positive cases.

Face coverings

Adults in communal settings will be asked to wear face coverings. **This includes when parents and carers are on the school site, particularly at the start and end of the day** when you drop off/pick up your children. We also ask where possible you allow children to come onto the playground by themselves to help us reduce the number of people on the playground.

Ventilation

We will continue to ensure that there is good ventilation throughout the building. As the temperature is dropping, you may wish to ensure that your child wears additional clothing layers throughout the autumn and winter months.

Reducing mixing

We will reduce the amount of mixing between year groups and classes where possible. Whilst this is not a return to class based bubbles, we will ensure that measures are put in place to limit mixing where practicably possible eg. assemblies and playtimes. **At this stage we do not feel it necessary to return to staggered start times for classes but would ask that as you arrive at the site you should follow the one way and the keep left system to enter and exit the site safely and as soon as you are able to.** This will keep the flow of people steady and reduce interaction and congestion. When the gates open at 8.45am both Reception and Year 1 children will go straight in and not need to line up. Year 2 to 6 will line up in their usual places. Parents will not be able to wait at the line and we ask if you leave the site as soon as possible to reduce congestion.

The pedestrian Gate near Kidzworld will only be used as an entrance at both times of the day. Both the car park and the field gates will operate by a keep left system and can be used as both an entrance and an exit at both times of the day. This will be continually reviewed and changes may be made if needed to keep us as safe as possible.

Public events & visiting the academy

From Monday 1st November we will suspend all whole-school and year group events e.g assemblies. **This will also include any events where parents and families would have been invited to attend.** Wherever possible these events will be reshaped to take a virtual format.

This means that unfortunately, parents' evening will now be held virtually. We will send out information to support this. If you have not booked your time slot please do so as soon as possible. If you do not feel able to attend virtually or via phone call then please let us know and we will try to rearrange once restrictions are lifted.

It is recommended that we once again limit visitors to the site. We would ask that you support this by **only visiting the academy office when necessary and that any other requests are carried out by telephone or email contact.**

At the moment, this does not affect our Christmas plans but we will continue to update you of changes in line with both local and national guidance.

Educational visits

We will review all educational visits which are scheduled to take place over the next few weeks and determine whether these can take place. I will communicate to you directly if there are any cancellations that affect the provision for your child.

As you will appreciate, the implementation of the above measures will significantly change how we currently operate. We all want to return to normal as soon as possible, however in the context of the Health Protection Board's advice, the changes are necessary at this time. As stated in the letter from the Council, this advice will be reviewed in 2 weeks and at this point we will also review the measures that we have taken. I will write to you again with updates on how our response changes.

I would like to end this letter by thanking you for your understanding, patience and support. This is proving to be another difficult year for us all - but by working together we will continue to make positive steps forwards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Corbett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "L" and a clear, legible name "Corbett".

Lindsey Corbett
Principal