

19<sup>th</sup> June 2021

## COVID-19 Updates

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well. I write to clarify the Academy's position on some of the changes in government and DfE guidance; I hope that this letter explains how the final week of term will work and our intention for a smooth return to school in September 2021.

The government has now announced its plans for the Step 4 lifting of restrictions, and I am sure you join me in welcoming the fact that by the time the new term starts in September, life will have returned to some form of the normality we enjoyed pre-pandemic. The arrangements for the new term will follow in a letter in due course. It is important to note that we will continually monitor the published guidance and will notify you of any changes. Whilst we all look forward to some normality, I also appreciate that for some students and their parents / carers, these changes may bring uncertainty and some anxiety. I would ask you to contact the school in the usual way if we can support at all.

### Outbreak Management Plan & Risk Assessment

We are required to have an outbreak management plan in place, in the event of Public Health identifying an outbreak of the virus, either in the Academy or in our local community. This plan has been drafted and we will continue to work closely with Public Health in September. It may be necessary to reintroduce a number of the measures outlined below should an outbreak occur. You will be kept fully informed should this be the case.

A new risk assessment is also being developed to cover the four new control measures – ensure good hygiene for everyone; maintain appropriate cleaning regimes; keep occupied spaces well ventilated and follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases. This will be shared, once complete and signed off, on our website and we will contact you to make you aware that is it there.

### Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing for Secondary Students

Regular asymptomatic rapid testing will stay in place until the end of the term, and then pause over the summer holidays.

I want to thank our students for their efforts in continuing to test themselves twice a week at home. Although they do not have to test whilst away from the Academy for the holidays, testing is still widely available if they, and your family, wish to do so, and kits can be collected either from your local pharmacy or ordered [online](#).

**At the start of the new academic year, the government recommends all secondary students have 2 voluntary on-site lateral flow device tests, 3 to 5 days apart.** Students and staff are then required to

continue to undertake twice-weekly home testing until the end of September, when this will be reviewed. We are currently finalising our plans for how onsite testing will work in practice and details of this will be provided to you in due course.

A small on-site asymptomatic testing facility will be maintained throughout September, for those students who may require assistance to test.

### Consent for LFD Testing

Secondary students can only be tested in the Academy if you, as parent or carer, have given explicit consent. **Even if you have already given consent, we require you to do so again for September 2021. Please follow this link to complete the online survey, this must be completed please, for each of the children that attend from your family.**

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/IZ5Q5F/>

### Face Coverings

From today, 19th July, the government is removing the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet. This includes public transport and dedicated transport to school. From Step 4, the government no longer advises that face coverings should be worn by students and staff, either in classrooms or communal areas. I recognise that this change may cause some anxiety to some parents, carers and their child(ren) and have therefore made the decision, in line with our local Public Health recommendations that students and staff should continue to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas and whilst moving around school **for the remainder of this school year**. This is due to the number of cases in Wakefield and in our school community and the recent outbreak in the Academy. I am hopeful that transmission rates will reduce before the start of term and masks won't be necessary, but in any event this situation will be continually reviewed and further information will follow at the appropriate time.

### Contact Tracing and Self-isolation

Due to changes in government guidance from today, July 19<sup>th</sup>, schools will no longer be expected to undertake any contact tracing – this will all be carried out by NHS Test and Trace. Public Health Wakefield have asked all Wakefield schools to continue to undertake contact tracing until the end of term on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2021. Again, this is due to the sheer volume of cases in our area and the recent outbreaks in a large number of Wakefield schools.

From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18, and adults who have been fully vaccinated, will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case, and advised to take a PCR test. We strongly advise all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. If the PCR test is negative, the child will be able to continue to attend school and will not have to self-isolate.

Testing for close contacts under 18 will be split into two categories. All primary, secondary and college age children should take a single PCR test. Early years children should only take a PCR test if a member of their household tests positive.

**Developing Symptoms of COVID-19 & Positive Cases**

Students and staff should not come into the academy if they have coronavirus symptoms, have had a positive test result, or have been required to quarantine. If anyone in the academy develops symptoms, however mild, they will be sent home and advised to follow NHS advice. We strongly advise all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

**Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) Students**

All CEV students should be attending the Academy unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care, who have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend. If you have concerns regarding your child please speak to the academy.

**Travelling Abroad**

If you are travelling abroad, you should be mindful of the potential impact on your child's education if they are required to quarantine on return to the UK.

I will write to you again in due course to give you the details of our plans for the safe and smooth return to school in September. I thank-you again for your continued support in these difficult times.

Yours faithfully



**Miss L Proctor**  
**Principal**

### **Further information from the Principal**

The letter above was provided to me by Public Health England and I am required to send this out. It feels impersonal so I want to provide some further information here. I recognise that receiving this letter may be upsetting and frustrating. Our students have done all that we ask but this virus is such that simply sitting in a classroom, next to someone who has tested positive, requires action to prevent further spread.

Since receiving notification of the positive case, I have spoken with Public Health England. This is currently an isolated case and requires all those (staff or students) who have been in close contact with the infected person, to self-isolate for 10 days. I have therefore:

- Been in contact with the individual
- Contacted each of the students and staff members and identified, from the seating plan, all those students sitting next to, or in very close proximity to the infected person
- Identified any friendship groups who may have been in close proximity to the person

### Work Set

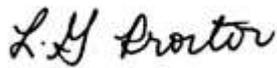
Airedale Academy provides all online learning via the Google Classroom Remote Learning Platform. All students should be aware of their Google Classroom log-in and, therefore, should be able to access the work provided via this platform. The work set will appear in the class stream for each

subject that your child would have, should they be in school and will replicate the hours of learning that they would have for a given subject should they be in school. This will form the basis of the work your child needs to complete over the next 10 days but further information will be provided this week by the year team.

If you are concerned about a lack of suitable devices in the home, or a lack of internet access in the home, please make contact with your child's Progress Leader.

Finally, I appreciate how challenging this situation is for you and your family. If you require any support, please don't hesitate to contact the school. I'm afraid that this won't be the first such letter I write this year.

Yours faithfully



Miss L Proctor  
Principal