

22 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to advise you that Wakefield Local Authority have written to all schools and asked for renewed measures to be in place when we return after the half term holiday. The reason for this is the current high case rate in Wakefield which is badly affecting the education of young people.

We have agreed to increase the current safety measures in the academy, this letter details those measures; our risk assessment will also be updated on the Academy website accordingly before we return on the 1st November. We know that you may find this concerning and we are continuing to monitor the situation. Please be reassured that for most people and especially for children and young people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

What will continue:

- Handwashing and hand sanitising around the site including on entry to every classroom and the dining room (students are welcome to bring their own sanitiser)
- Classroom ventilation - windows and doors open wherever possible
- Classroom seating plans will remain in place
- We will continue with virtual assemblies and virtual parents evenings
- Our one-way systems within the academy will remain

However, we now need to implement further measures to limit the spread of the virus. From Monday 1st November 2021, the following additional measures will be in place and we ask for your support in reinforcing these messages at home:

- **Masks.** We strongly advise staff and students to wear masks in classrooms and communal areas, this includes all corridors and when moving around the dining room and on public transport. Disposable masks will be made available to students when they arrive at the academy for the first few days on our return, but from then on we expect students to bring their own.
- **If someone in the household has tested positive for COVID-19** (on LFD or PCR), we advise pupils/students 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 student can return to school but must stay at home and arrange another test if they go on to develop symptoms.

Outwood Grange Academies Trust, a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company number 06995649.

Registered office address: Potovens Lane, Outwood, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2PF.

VAT number: 158 2720 04. Outwood Grange Academies Trust is an exempt charity.

A list of Directors' names is open to inspection at our registered office.

Some children are exempt from this advice:

- 12–16-year-olds who have had at least one dose of the vaccine more than 14 days ago.
- Any child aged between 5 – 16 who has tested positive for COVID-19 via a PCR test within the past 90 days.

Parents/carers who still want their child to continue to attend school have the right to do so. We do hope that most families will understand why they are being asked to do this and will feel able to keep their child at home for a short period, especially as at least one other household member will be at home self-isolating after testing positive.

- **Reduce mixing between year groups and classes as much as possible** to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
 - We have 2 lunch times when two year groups are mixed - each year group will be allocated a dedicated seating area in the dining room and doors and windows will remain open. We will explain to students where this will be on our return.
 - Students will be allocated specific days when they can access the library at lunch time.
- Wherever possible, **suspending whole-school or year group events**
 - We ask that again parents and other visitors only attend the academy site when absolutely necessary and by appointment only.
 - Our prize giving evenings in November - may not be able to take place. More to follow on this.
- **Educational trips and residential visits** may not go ahead. We currently do not have plans for these but we will be considering how we do this in the near future.

Of course, we rely on parents/carers to reinforce these messages at home and thank you in advance for your continued support. The aim of these measures is to avoid a further increase in cases within the academy. We will continue to monitor the situation carefully, this will be reviewed at the end of November and we will take further action should it be necessary.

Please support your child to do a lateral flow test at least twice a week, and let us know at once if the test is positive. This is a really important way of picking up cases quickly and preventing spread, it is especially important that all staff and students test regularly.

Lateral flow tests are available to order online at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> or for collection outside of our main reception. Students can also collect test kits at social times from the stage in the dining room.

It is understandable that this is a worrying time. It is important that students come to school focussed on learning and follow the key messages of being 'safe, respectful and responsible' at all times. Students have made an excellent start to the academic year and with these enhanced measures we will minimise any disruption to their education. Attendance

continues to be a high priority at Outwood Academy Freeston and, following the advice in this letter, students should make every effort to be in school.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Allott', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Lisa Allott
Principal

For regular updates on Academy news and events, follow us on Twitter @OutwoodFreeston or view our website www.freeston.outwood.com