

1st November 2021

Dear Families,

During the half term break the team met to discuss the latest Public Health guidance and the rapidly rising infections we saw in Mendip before the half term break. We reviewed our existing infection control measures and updated our Risk Assessment and contingency plans.

On the 22nd of October Public Health Somerset wrote to all schools explaining that the rate of infection in Somerset was very high and that the majority of cases were among 10 – 14 year olds – many of whom have siblings at Primary. We know that this half term break will have reduced mixing so we hope that this will have brought those cases down. As a precaution Public Health Somerset have advised that all schools re-open at Amber status. There are three levels of escalation regarding COVID-19 within Schools – Blue, Amber or Red.

As an Amber school we will ensure that the following continues throughout the Academy:

- That we follow and promote up to date guidance on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of Covid-19.
- That we continue to work with test and trace and Public Health England acting on their advice.
- That we maintain cleaning regimes and reintroduce focused cleaning of high use areas during the day.
- That we keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
- That we use appropriate PPE when dealing with a potential infection outbreak.

On top of this we will now also:

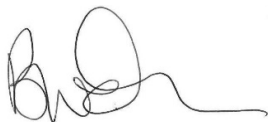
- Suspend assemblies until further notice.
- Ensure that lunch times are staggered and given distinct seating areas.
- Ask that Staff wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas.
- Ask that any close contacts of confirmed cases of Covid-19 identified by NHS Test & Trace book a PCR test and whilst awaiting test results, undertake a daily LFD test and only attend school if this is negative. The daily LFD testing is at the parent or guardian's discretion for primary age children.
- Initially ask that adults wear face coverings when on the Academy site – this is a request at this point.

In order to stabilise these measures, we will keep them in place for the first two weeks back after half term unless there is a significant outbreak that requires increased measures. We will then review these measures to look at what impact they are having and update our risk controls at this point.

Possible future next steps could be:

- We go back to bubbles.
- We review and restructure any larger gatherings.
- We use the Marque for lunch times again (though it is cold and would need heating and would be a last resort).
- We change the school time table so that we control key pinch points during the day and reintroduce a staggered start or end to the day.
- Formally ask that all adults wear a face covering when on the Academy site.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BW', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Walton