



# Winterton Community Academy

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Headteacher – Mr K Rowlands

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Ref:O/KRParLet/testing/jsn

12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

We are writing to you following our correspondence on Friday and in particular with reference to our arrangements to support a safe return to school on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July.

We are conscious that a small number of parents / carers have raised concerns relating to our request for all pupils to conduct a lateral flow test for COVID-19. Some concerns have also been raised where children who do not take a test are not permitted to mix with their peers in school or attend classroom lessons. A very small number of parents have raised the question as to whether this is an infringement of their rights, a breach of the Equality Act 2010 or is against our values of inclusion.

We have therefore taken further, professional advice on this matter and as a result, we maintain our stance that for the remaining two weeks of term, an agreement to test is a fair and legitimate requirement.

We have a legal and moral obligation to ensure that the school is as safe as we can make it, for all stake-holders and as such, it is felt that this is a reasonable request to allow us to achieve that. The academy has to respond to the level of risk which at the moment is very much heightened in the local area. All of our measures have been discussed and considered in conjunction with Public Health England, Lincs.

The advice that we have received highlights that the safety and well-being of our staff and students takes precedent and that no individual is being unfairly disadvantaged given that all students have access to testing and that all students will be able to access provision irrespective as to whether they test or not.

As a school, we have the autonomy to organise our provision as we deem to be appropriate and under these unprecedented circumstances, it is not unreasonable to ask that those students who have not been tested, remain distanced. Naturally, it would be our preference for all students to consent to testing so that they can attend their lessons without presenting a risk to others. However, we respect your individual choice on this matter and will ensure that where a parent / child does not wish to consent, then they will have a safe, supervised area of the school to allow them to access their learning. If you do not give your child consent to test but still wish for them to attend school, please ask that they report to the school reception at 08:50 and that they do not go directly to their lesson.

If you do not wish for your child to be tested but would prefer for them to remain at home and work remotely during this period then that is also your personal choice and we will not take any further action with regards to attendance.

I trust that you understand and accept our position on this matter. We are absolutely committed to the inclusion of all students but must remain equally vigilant to manage the risks presented by COVID-19, particularly during this period where cases locally are so high.

Under these circumstances, the steps that we have put in place are both reasonable and necessary for us to be able to re-open with confidence.

Many thanks for your understanding and support,

On behalf of the Academy Leadership Team and The Governing Body.