



Winterton Community Academy

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Headteacher – Mr K Rowlands

4th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have had a wonderful Christmas and I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all of the staff to wish you and your family a happy new year.

As we prepare for our pupils to return to school tomorrow, I am writing to keep you informed of the most recent government guidance for schools and what effect this has for us operationally.

You may be aware that the most recent government guidance has recommended that all children who can wear facemasks in Year 7 and above, do so, both within the classroom environment and when transitioning indoors. It is clear within the guidance that this is a temporary measure and we politely request that our students follow this guidance so as to keep our working environment as safe as we can make it.

The guidance also states that pupils must wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and should wear it on dedicated transport to and from school.

Whilst it is important to us to take every precaution necessary, we recognise through the guidance that there are circumstances where people are not able to wear face coverings and we are mindful and respectful of these such circumstances.

The government guidance highlights the following rationale relative to educational settings:

- People who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability.
- People for whom putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress.
- People speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate.
- To avoid the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others.
- You are also permitted to remove a face covering in order to take medication.

There are some circumstances by which face coverings are not appropriate, for example during PE lessons.

Whilst we appreciate that some people are reluctant to wear a face covering as a result of personal choice, we kindly ask for your support during this period for the benefit of keeping all of our school community safe and therefore, those who are able to wear a face covering, do so.

The guidance states that the introduction of consistent groups (bubbles) is not necessary and this is not something that will be in place. We will continue to monitor the situation in school and we may refer to this strategy as a contingency if necessary.

All other aspects of our risk assessment will remain in place, notably:

- Classrooms will be ventilated with windows and doors remaining open. If you or your child is concerned that they will be cold, please advise them to wear a base layer underneath their normal uniform. Coats, sweatshirts and hoodies will not be permitted inside the classroom.
- Hand Hygiene: Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should remain regular practice. This should be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.
- Respiratory Hygiene: The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach remains very important and further advice can be obtained through the e-bug Covid-19 website.
- Sharing and use of equipment: Students are advised not to share personal equipment. Any equipment used in school will be cleansed and sanitised between use.
- One way system remains in place

If your child develops any COVID-19 symptoms whatsoever, we request that they should stay at home and follow public health advice. It is evident that someone can be infected for a number of days before it registers as positive on a lateral flow test and therefore we ask that you remain vigilant and if in doubt, please keep your child at home and ensure that you report this in the usual way.

All visitors to school will be asked to take a lateral flow device test before entering the school until further notice.

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools and we ask that staff and students continue to test twice weekly at home, using lateral flow device test kits, 3-4 days apart. Whilst testing remains voluntary, it is strongly encouraged. If your child is unable to test at home for any reason and you require further support, please contact us and we can arrange for a test to be taken in school.

In line with the government guidance, school attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and we are unable to provide suitable work for anyone choosing not to attend. If a pupil is required to self-isolate then we will continue to provide them with remote learning provision during this time. If you have any concerns relating to your child being able to attend school, please contact us to discuss this further.

On behalf of my colleagues I would like to thank you for your patience and support during what continues to be a challenging time for everyone.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our pupils back to school and anticipate that it will be as close to 'business as normal' as possible.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mr Rowlands', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mr Rowlands
Headteacher