



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

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'Excellence for All'

24th September 2020

COVID-19 and Remote Learning Update

Dear Parent/Carer

Firstly a word of thanks for your support during these unprecedented times; attendance figures for all year groups continue to be positive and has exceeded 95% since the start of term and we are extremely grateful to you all for that.

As we are continuously trying to keep our children and staff safe, I write to ask for your assistance in this regard.

- If your child is identified as having come into 'close contact' with a child who has tested positive for COVID-19, we shall telephone you and then send your child home as quickly as possible. We shall write to you, telling you the day it is safe for them to return to school. That date is 14 days from their last contact with the positive case. Your child will receive a wellbeing call during their isolation period to check they are well and to check they have been able to engage with the online learning. Free School Meals will still be provided to those eligible. It is therefore vital that we have your correct telephone number and email address on our system. Please contact the Main Academy Office if any such details need to be updated.
- If asked to self-isolate, your child must stay at home. Your child must not go to any public areas, including collecting siblings from other schools. Further details of what your child needs to do are in NHS Guidance: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>
- Can I also remind you to let the school know if your child develops COVID-19 symptoms as soon as you can, including the outcome of any test, either positive or negative.
- We have been impressed with the overwhelming majority of students who have been wearing face coverings correctly. Please can you continue to ensure your child has a face covering with them in school at all times; for those using cloth coverings, it is recommended that, ideally, these should include at least two layers of fabric. As the North East is now officially in 'local lockdown' situation, face coverings should now be worn by all in corridors when moving around inside the school, as well as on public transport. Please inform the academy if your child is medically exempt.

PTO

Document available in large font, alternative language or audio format on request



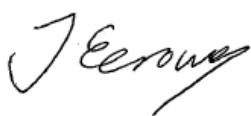
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- To keep schools fully open, the government have devised 4 tiers of restriction which may be used in the event of an increased COVID-19 outbreak within a school or local community. We are currently operating at Tier 1, the default position for all schools where students in Year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and students when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained. If we are instructed to move to Tier 2, secondary schools then move to a rota model, combining on-site provision with remote education. I will be informing all parents and carers early next week of our contingency plan based upon the 4 tiers of restriction.
- As a school we will continue to use TEAMS to facilitate learning from home. Following an initial technical issue, which meant it was not fully operational last week; we are now confident that all TEAMS for 'new' classes have been created and are fully functioning. To ensure continuity of learning for any students who have been directed to self-isolate, subject staff have been asked to upload lesson resources to TEAMS, following the delivery of the lesson in school, for students to access from home. If there are any issues with access to and/or IT devices, you should contact your child's Head of Learning.
- Year 11 are currently self-isolating as a year group bubble. The year group is successfully continuing with their normal school day from home. If all students are self-isolating (as in one whole year group) then we will run online, audio lessons in real time using Teams. These will be at the scheduled lesson time in the day for those classes. Students can hear teachers talk through presentations and listen to tasks and are able to communicate via message to the member of staff as the lesson progresses. So far, we have had many positive comments from both parents and students, who now are having live lessons delivered into their homes. Class registers are also taken and we will follow up any student who has not attended the remote lesson immediately.
- If there is "partial self-isolation" in a class in years, 7 – 11 (i.e. one or more students self-isolating, but some are still attending) then staff will put the lesson materials they have used onto the class team as soon as possible after the lesson. Staff will add a short message to those students who are self-isolating to direct them to the materials and the work they need to complete. Students who are absent though illness will also be able to access this.
- Sixth Form staff are trialling adding in self-isolating sixth form students to lessons 'live' by making a Teams call to the student so they can participate. This is something we would like to progress if viable to enable that extra level of support for sixth formers due to the technical demands of their subjects.

We appreciate that this is an unsettling time for us all. However please be assured that we continue to liaise with Public Health England and are doing our very best to ensure continuation of learning within the Academy.

Thank you again for your continued support as we all work hard together to keep staff, students and community safe during these difficult times.

Yours faithfully



J E Crowe
Principal