

RG / KV

25th February 2021

Dear Parents /Carers

Well, I feel that with the green shoots of Spring, we can also see a dim light at the end of a very long tunnel! We still have a long way to go until we are able to live with COVID-19, just as we now live with the flu, but I am far more optimistic. If people keep doing the right thing we may hit the date targets the Prime Minister has set.

I and the rest of the staff are so excited to welcome back all the pupils and try to get some routine and normality back into our lives.

All schools reopen 8th March and attendance will be mandatory, unless your child is shielding or has an underlying health condition. I know many of you will be anxious about the return, but we have all the COVID compliance measures in place that we have to follow. We will work with families where there is no medical reason for the child not to return, to support and help them to reduce anxieties, in order for their child to return as soon as possible after 8th March. If your child is not returning 8th March and they come on transport, please can you make sure you notify transport that they are not required.

Pupils who live with someone who is Critically Extremely Vulnerable, but who are not Critically Extremely Vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.

We will be operating normal school hours (8.45am – 3.00pm), but to relieve the numbers of people around the gates and ensure social distancing, we would ask parents who bring their children to WFS to not drop off before 9.00am and to collect at 2.45pm. Hopefully this will change as the transmission rate goes down. We expect all parents to socially distance and wear masks when on the school premises. If you are not wearing a mask we would hope you wear an exemption lanyard as a visual aid for people. Please make sure you are mindful of social distancing when you hand your child over to staff.

Russell House is also open from 8th March and we now only have a couple of spare rooms. If you are considering Russell House for your child and want a chat about it, just give Abby Baker (Head of Care a ring) and she can talk you through all the questions you may have.

WFS staff have had their first vaccine and many of our older pupils have also had their first vaccine (I know some parents are keeping their child off school for a couple of weeks to give time for the vaccine to become more effective). This is fantastic news and I know we are looking forward to getting our second jab sometime in April. We do not receive any information regards the vaccination programme for pupils as it depends on age, SEND and where you live, but it's good news about adults with learning disabilities now being a priority group. Contact your own GP to find out exactly what it means for your child.

Where pupils aged 11+ are able to, they will need to wear face masks on transport (just like before Christmas), but we are now having to ensure they wear them in corridors, communal areas and areas where bubbles may cross. Where possible, for a short time, we are also asking they wear them in classrooms. We have plenty of spare masks if your child forgets to bring one.

Staff are tested twice weekly using a lateral flow test to pick up any asymptomatic cases. Since using the test in January, we have had no positive cases. From 8th March staff will still be testing twice weekly, but it will be via a home testing kit. We will be in contact by the end of the day tomorrow with Secondary (aged 11+) pupil parents who think their child may be able to carry out the lateral flow test independently and are not already in school. They will be invited in on Monday 1st, Wednesday 3rd and Friday 5th, in the afternoon to carry out a test independently. Parents will be asked to wait outside whilst they carry out the test, and take them immediately home. Pupils do not have to have the test, and if a pupil refuses, we will not insist that they have it.

If a child tests positive or they live with someone who has symptoms or has tested positive and are a household contact or had close contact of someone who has COVID-19 they will still need to self-isolate for 10 days. This may mean we will have to close classes or bubbles but fingers crossed it won't happen. It is vital you keep us up to date if someone has symptoms or has tested positive.

We are all trying to stay healthy so PLEASE do not send your child in if they are unwell in anyway.

Omegle

For those who do not know what Omegle is, it is an app that allows strangers to talk to each other anonymously. It has been reported that many children and young people have been using/have used this site. Omegle has been linked with grooming on multiple occasions so please be vigilant.

Warning - The below link is a link to the Omegle site for those who have not seen it before:

<https://omegle.onl/online/>

Looking forward to seeing everyone on 8th March, many thanks for your continued support.

Yours Sincerely



Rebecca Garratt
Headteacher