

September 21st 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing after a week when the increase in cases of covid-19 and the failings of the test and trace system have been causes for concern both locally and nationally. As you probably know, there was one confirmed case of the virus among the students at Fallibroome last week. I am glad to say that all their students are due back in school today (Monday) but it has been a difficult time for colleagues there and my thoughts have been with them all.

Although there have not yet been any confirmed cases here at the Academy, a small number of colleagues and students have reported symptoms and are currently self isolating and are awaiting the results of tests. As autumn turns into winter, it is almost inevitable that, at any one time, there will be a number of members of the Academy community reporting fevers or coughs. Some parents have been in touch asking for detailed information about children who are off school. I am sure you will appreciate that this is not information we can share. If (or when) we do get positive test results for any of our students, we will share the year group affected and notify parents immediately of any measures we need to take which may include sending some, or all, of the other students in the Year group home for a period of self isolation.

One of the lessons of the last week was that our “local” Health Protection Team (HPT), which is, in fact, based in Liverpool, did not have the capacity to deal with the volume of calls it was receiving from schools across Cheshire and Merseyside where there were confirmed Covid cases. This has been recognised by both the DfE and Cheshire East Council who now set up dedicated helplines. This is a very welcome development but, in the light of events last week, we have amended our risk assessment to say if we cannot get timely advice from either of these sources, we will make our own decisions about possible partial or complete closures of the Academy, erring, if necessary, on the side of caution.

A second lesson learned is the need for a prompt means by which parents could report directly to us if an Academy student had a positive test result, particularly if this result were received in the evening or at a weekend. During the working day, please contact the Academy as usual. After 3.30 on school days and at any time at the weekend, please text

07340 665057. In your text message, please let us know the name, year and form of your child, the date the symptoms began and a contact phone number.

Meanwhile, we are working at speed to complete our contingency plans in case there are Year group bubbles or, potentially, the whole Academy, who need to work at home. In line with the government guidance these plans will ensure that we build on the practice that we developed over the summer term and:

- use a curriculum sequence that allows access to high-quality online and offline resources and teaching videos and that is linked to our curriculum expectations
- give access to high quality remote education resources

- select the online tools that will be consistently used across the Academy in order to allow interaction, assessment and feedback and make sure staff are trained in their use
- provide printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks, for students who do not have suitable online access
- recognise that some students may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so work with families to deliver a broad and ambitious curriculum
- set assignments so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day in a number of different subjects

Next week also sees a key development in our recovery curriculum. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday **the school day for all Year 11 students will be extended to 4.00pm** to allow for an additional hour of teaching in each of the core subjects. The sequence of lessons will be as follows:

Tuesday	Maths
Wednesday	English
Thursday	Science

I am very grateful for the work that Miss Hart, Mr Laverick and Mr Sutton have done in preparation for these additional sessions and the commitment shown by all their staff in contributing to the delivery of this important support. This additional provision will run until Christmas in the first instance and we will review its impact at that point.

As has been the case so many times when I have written to you over the last few months, the immediate outlook does seem uncertain at the moment. However, please rest assured that, whatever the future may hold, all of us here at the Academy will continue to do everything we can to ensure that your children are safe, are well taught and are supported in rising to whatever challenges may lie ahead.

With every best wish



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