

CEC/JWI

11 September 2020



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Dear Parents and Carers

We have now been back in school for just over a week and it has been a start to a new school year like no other.

For many pupils, returning to school will have brought a mixture of emotions ranging between excitement and apprehension. Excitement about being with their friends again and a return to some routine and structure, apprehension about what school would be like in these ever changing and uncertain times. Our aim, throughout lockdown and from the start of this academic year, is to promote a safe re-engagement with learning supported by our ethos and values through the 5Rs (Respect, Resilience, Reflection, Resourcefulness and Responsibility).

Whilst ensuring all our pupils have a full, broad and balanced learning experience, we have done everything possible to manage the risks the current pandemic presents. The introduction of designated meeting points in year bubbles before registration, year group forms, a one way system, split lunch periods, staggered year group end to the school day, hand sanitizing and regular desk cleaning are all changes pupils have had to contend with. Alongside: new classes, new teachers and for our Year 7 pupils a new school.

As a result of the measures we have put in place and in line with the current guidance, there is no requirement for pupils to wear face masks. However, if pupils feel more comfortable moving around the building or in other communal areas, they are welcome to do so. They cannot be worn in classrooms, but pupils can elect to wear a clear face visor.

Change on this scale can be difficult for anyone, but I would like to say how proud of and impressed I have been with our pupils. They have taken the changes in their stride, they may still be getting used to some of the new routines, but it is very evident that they are working with us and each other to make sure these safety measures are as effective as they can be.

We are at the start of a new chapter in education and, despite our positive start, I am certain we will face a number of challenges over the coming months. With the rise of cases nationally, there is every chance pupils at Oakwood will come into contact with the virus and we may have to ask pupils or groups of pupils to quarantine at home. If this does happen, learning will continue remotely using Google Classroom and Chromebooks (iPads for Y11).

To help us minimise the risk of infection, if someone in your household has the symptoms, then you should follow the government guidance. Your household should isolate and the individual with symptoms should get a test. If the test is negative, your child can return to school, if it is positive, they should remain at home for 14 days. There is no need for people without symptoms to have a test, but if they do develop symptoms a test would be required.

A member of the Inspire Trust



Registered in England: 08775996

Stay at home guidance for Covid-19

Remember to carry out the self health check on your child each morning, if you can answer yes to any of the following you should keep your child at home and arrange for a test. In the case of points 1 to 3, the child should remain at home until the test results are returned and only return to school if the result is negative.

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature);
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual);
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

Have they, or any member of your family, been in contact with someone who has tested positive for the coronavirus in the past 24 hours or have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace?

If they have been in contact with someone with the virus, then they should self-isolate for 14 days.

Details of how to get a test can be found by following the link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

If you are unable to get a test for your child and need our support, please contact our Attendance Team, pss-attendance@oakwood.ac

I have spoken to pupils this week about the importance of maintaining their distance wherever possible. The arrangements we have in place in classrooms and for movement around school manage this risk. However, during break times pupils need to follow one of our 5Rs, by taking responsibility for maintaining a safe distance from others and I would like your support in reinforcing this at home. They should avoid any unnecessary contact, such as hand shaking, hugging or activities where they come in to deliberate direct contact with another person. I am pleased to report that this has been observed by the vast majority of our pupils. We will continue to promote the message that we all have a responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe and this is one significant way of doing that.

I would also like to thank you as parents and carers for your support and trust. Our attendance last week has been as good as any 'normal' school year, this not only reflects the confidence you place in us, but also the value you place in education and the role school plays in a child's development and progress.

Yours faithfully



Chris Eccles
Head of School