

6th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas and that you have managed to keep well. I would like to thank you for all your support through the Covid-19 outbreak so far.

I am writing to let you know changes to the measures we have in place for managing Covid-19, following updated guidance from the Government.

As you will be aware it is vitally important to keep schools open and our priority is to maintain provision for our learners. We have made a decision to extend the use of face coverings/masks in school. We are asking all staff to wear face coverings/masks in communal spaces including corridors in all buildings. We are encouraging learners who are able, to wear a face covering in corridors and communal spaces. Due to the needs of our learners, we are not introducing face coverings/masks in our classrooms.

No learner will be forced to wear a face covering/mask or excluded from an activity for not wearing one. We believe that wearing a face covering/mask is now a life skill which will benefit our learners in keeping themselves and others safe in the community. We want to support them with this.

The vast majority of staff and many pupils have fully engaged with the vaccination programme. All staff are asked to carry out twice weekly lateral flow tests and we would encourage you and our secondary pupils to do the same. We continue to implement preventative measures of good hygiene, regular cleaning and good ventilation. We have been monitoring our ventilation with the use of CO2 monitors, which identifies when air circulation can be improved. We will be increasing our use of outdoor learning when the weather allows.

We have already sent out a letter from the local authority which includes the current guidance on self-isolation and testing. This may be subject to change. I would like to make you aware that since October we have at times been managing high levels of staff absence. This is likely to continue in the short term due to high transmission. We will do everything we can to maintain provision and ensure pupils can remain in school. Our priority is to ensure everyone is safe and this may mean that planned activities may not always take place for reasons of health and safety.

Our updated risk assessment and Outbreak Management Plan will shortly be available on the school website.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or queries regarding the information in this letter.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Anderson-Rawlins
Head of School
Riverside Meadows Academy