



Explore, Learn and Grow Together

Brewery Road
Wooler
Northumberland
NE71 6QF

Tuesday 4th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year – I hope this communication finds you all well having enjoyed a good festive break with minimal interruptions from COVID and isolation. Our schools will be open for business as usual tomorrow and I have summarised some key information below for you all as you get ready to send the children back into school.

COVID SECURE MEASURES

All of the COVID secure protocols and procedures remain in place across our schools – these are noted below:

- **Hygiene (hand and respiratory)**
- **Sensible distancing between groups of children and between staff observing age appropriate guidance**
- **Management of ventilation in all areas of our schools (windows open in corridors and staff managing window/door opening & room purging informed by CO2 monitors and our own senses)**
- **Face coverings are to continue to be worn by all adults and by Glendale pupils in all communal areas. All children using school transport will continue to wear face coverings. Children in Year 7 & Year 8 will temporarily be required to wear face coverings in lessons – this will be reviewed towards the end of January.**
- **Visitors to school will conform to these expectations, meetings are to be virtual where possible and COVID secure when required to be face-to-face. Parental access to school will continue to be restricted.**
- **LFD testing for staff and KS3 pupils will continue twice weekly (Wednesday evening/Thursday mornings & Sunday evenings/Monday mornings).**
- **Isolation duration changes have been implemented reducing isolation periods from 10 to 7 days (with negative LFD tests required on day 6 and day 7).**

We are all now used to managing these activities day-to-day here in school and all children will be reminded of these procedures tomorrow morning with their class teachers and form tutors. We have good stocks of disposable face masks which will be provided to children as required but children are welcome to bring in clean suitable ones from home. With the increased prevalence of the virus face masks are required rather than the less effective buff type face coverings. Children will be reminded of the hygiene expectations for the use of face masks in school.

I would also ask for your continued support with regards to suitable clothing for schools this term. As the temperatures drop to more normal winter levels again this week managing natural ventilation while keeping the school warm is a daily challenge. Please ensure that your child is well wrapped up for school in their uniform with layers for warmth.

Reporting pupil absence

All pupil absence (COVID related or otherwise) from school must be reported to the school office before 8.55am on each day of absence. This can be done by phone (01668 281470 - messages can be left on the office answer phone before 8.30am) or by email to the respective school administration address:

woolerfirst@woolerandglendale.co.uk

glendalemiddle@woolerandglendale.co.uk

Please do not use individual teacher emails for absence reporting – thank you. I have also reminded my colleagues today that they should not be managing work related communications after 5pm on weekdays or over weekends. They are all working incredibly hard and need to be able to switch off and spend time with their families.

LFD testing

Regular lateral flow testing for staff and our older pupils continues to be an important element of keeping our children, staff and families safe. We have tested our Year 7 and 8 pupils in school today (all negative 😊) and home testing for these children and for all staff continues twice weekly (Thursday mornings and Monday mornings). Additional home LFD test kits will be sent home to Key Stage 3 children this week.

Curriculum and timetables (including swimming)

As usual for the start of term teachers will be sending home this week via email information about the curriculum for the weeks ahead. I am also very please to confirm that our pool is operational again and swimming will resume at normal times across both schools from tomorrow (Wednesdays are Year 1 & Year 4 at WFS and 6D & Yr8 at GMS). Sadly, the devastation to our Forest School by Storm Arwen means that there will be no Forest School sessions at WFS until further notice. Getting the forest back in use will not be a quick fix with significant clearing required before we can assess which of the remaining trees we can keep and when we can start to replant and get the children back in the woods again.

Isolation work

Pupil absence due to COVID continues to be an issue for all schools and ours are no exception to this. We have no intention of closing any classes or year groups and this will only be considered if staff absences become critical for pupil safety or we are directed to do this by colleagues at the Local Authority. We are however prepared for this and for the almost inevitable sporadic pupil absence resulting from COVID cases and while awaiting PCR test results. Wooler First School will continue to use SeeSaw and Google Classroom will be used in Year 4 and for all Glendale year groups. We will also continue to use paper packs as necessary for short-term absence or where internet connectivity is an issue. We also have a number of curriculum laptops that can be loaned out to families again if required.

We are all really looking forward to seeing everyone back in school tomorrow for a term of active learning, time with friends and minimal disruption from COVID! I will finish this first communication of 2022 by extending a warm welcome to Laura Devlin who is joining the team at Little Acorns Nursery from today.

Kind regards

M.Deane-Hall
Executive Headteacher