

November 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

I write to update you regarding the recent changes to the Covid measures that have been happening at both a local and national level.

Across our part of the south west region, and most particularly in Devon, we are seeing a significant increase in positive Covid cases which, in turn, is having an impact on both our pupils and staff attendance across our WeST primary and secondary schools.

I am sure you are also concerned about the new, highly transmissible Covid variant Omicron. England's deputy Chief Medical Officer Jonathan Van-Tam has said that this variant is of increased concern. With 13 teaching days remaining to the end of the Autumn Term, and we break for the festive holidays, I want to reassure you that we will do all we can to minimise the spread of infection and keep our schools open for normal curriculum delivery.

Our schools will continue to adopt their established system of controls, but will now strengthen these through the re-introduction of wearing of face coverings in line with government policy. I also ask for your continued support with the LFD testing regime, where relevant. For our students attending our secondary schools please be reminded that LFD testing needs to continue over the Christmas break and that there will be mass testing at the start of next term.

As an additional means of preventing the spread of infection, and therefore aiding our schools in keeping open to as many children as possible until the end of term, I am sorry to say that, sadly, we have taken the difficult decision today to streamline our schools activity to its core delivery only. This will mean that events, such as parents evenings, will return to an online or phone appointment and that all non-core teaching activities, for example Christmas Fayres, nativity plays, will either take place online or postponed to a later date with each schools making their own arrangements to ensure that our children still enjoy these experiences.

This has been a difficult decision that I know will be met with disappointment. However, it is essential that we take sensible steps now that help our schools remain open when our staff profile is experiencing such pressure.

I want to thank you all for your continued support and understanding. This term has certainly presented as another challenge!

I close by taking this opportunity to wish you, your families a safe and festive break and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to the Spring Term on 4 January 2022.

Yours sincerely



Rob Haring
Chief Executive Officer