



Abbey School

an Academy within Nexus MAT

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Executive Headteacher: Mrs Luci Windle

Head of School: Mr Wayne Askham



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Update For Families 21/01/2021

Dear Families,

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. We wanted to update you on school matters as we have some students based at home and others physically in school. As yet, we have no further instructions on when the National Lockdown will end and school will fully reopen. With this in mind we will continue to review the situation every 2 weeks, offering families the opportunity to opt back into sending their child to school or keeping them at home. So far we have managed to keep physical numbers low in school which means we are able to socially distance and adhere to the strict risk assessments we have in place. Should more families wish to send children to school we will revert back to a part time offer so as to include as many children as possible.

We realise this isn't ideal for every child however, the safety of children, staff and families will always be paramount in the current Covid situation. Please do answer the text sent next week as soon as you possibly can due to us needing to organise staffing and the knock-on effect of staff having to organise childcare places for their own families given that many are being refused 'key worker' places for their own children.

Thank you to those families who are managing at home with their children through reorganising work commitments etc. we understand how difficult this can be and would like you to let staff know if there is anything you need for your child that will make the home learning easier for you.

Road Update

The new road leading up to Abbey School main site is finally open. For those of you who haven't been to the main site for a while, please do ensure when you are visiting the school to enter school via the new road and exit school via the old road, we will be implementing better signage for the road access within the next few weeks. We would like to give huge thanks to the Nexus Central Team who have supported us in securing the funding and seeing the project through as it makes such a huge difference to the safety of the school.

Online Learning

We have continued to develop our online learning option for pupils. Some of the older Key Stage 4 pupils are accessing live online teaching through their 'teams' access. Other students are using 'Seesaw' which is a learning platform that allows pupils to learn online and have a more personalised approach. All children are using the online package whether they are physically in school or based at home.

Our hope is that children will become confident enough to use 'Seesaw' to be as independent as possible when working from home to allow parents, who are also working at home, enough space to continue in their roles. We hope you have managed to download this platform and you can see the benefits of using it. If you are struggling accessing the internet or need an electronic device to do so, please contact school immediately and we will support you with this.

Lateral Flow Testing

We now have our Lateral Flow Testing room set up in school where staff are being tested each week for Covid. We have also begun testing pupils, with permission, on each of the 3 sites. We really admire firstly the staff for committing themselves to the medical test each week and also the pupils who have been tested, all of which have been incredibly sensible about the procedure. Again we can only emphasise the Lateral Flow Test is a test that will only pick up the highest viral load cases, it is highly probable that Covid will or can be in our school community at any one time despite the testing. For those families who have given permission for their child to be part of the test you will receive a test result each week. The card that pupils bring home is a 'receipt' that they have had the test with a corresponding bar code for the test result. As you are fully aware, the Government guidance on everything Covid changes daily to which school leaders are expected to respond immediately to, this presents many





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challenges in that it often feels we can plan no further than the next 2 weeks, sometimes less at times. The current guidance has reverted back to, where a student or member of staff has had close contact for more than 15 minutes over a day, must self-isolate for 10 days after the last known contact. We are no longer able to offer the daily test for pupils and staff to enable them to stay in school as we had planned previously. In short, your child will still be sent home to isolate for 10 days if they have had known contact with a positive case in school.

National Lockdown

We continue to hear stories where the National rules have been broken within our school community and can only send a personal plea to you all to follow the rules strictly during this time. We understand that the vast amount of families follow the rules properly however, as a school community one positive case which is brought inadvertently into school can spread quickly through a cough or unwashed hands which ultimately means the transmission of the virus will be brought home to houses. Despite what is reported in the press we do not have access to vaccines for staff, even those who are extremely clinically vulnerable and until staff are vaccinated we have to ensure we are all acting and behaving in a team approach. Please continue to wash your child's hands before they leave home, remove and wash their clothing upon their return, ensure face coverings are worn wherever possible and ensure you as a family are staying at home, particularly during the National Lockdown. As stated before, the numbers we see each day on the news are names and too often those names are now becoming people that we know and love. So, as a team, let's do everything in our power to keep each other safe during this tough time so that we see safer, brighter and better summer months with each day that goes by.

Free School Meal Vouchers Update

For parents/carers whose children are learning from home and who had chosen to have their vouchers directly emailed to them during the last voucher scheme, you will receive these tomorrow (22.01.2021) and then every Friday thereafter. The voucher scheme is the same as last Summer, this means you can choose the supermarket of your choice from the list. Parent/carers who opted for the school to print them have already been contacted.

If you do have any questions, concerns or thoughts please do let us know so that we can help you. Take care and above all, stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs L Windle

Mr W Askham

Executive Headteacher

Head of School

