



Cheshire West and Chester Council
Winsford High Street Community Primary and Nursery School
Winsford
Cheshire
CW7 2AU
E-mail: admin@highstreet.cheshire.sch.uk
Tel: 01606 668066

Headteacher: Mr M Joule B.Ed. (Hons)

www.winsfordhighstreetprimary.co.uk

Newsletter

4th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers

Happy New Year to you and your family. We hope that this year we can emerge from the current situation and start to move to some form of normality, although as I am sure you are all aware we have a way to go before we can achieve this!

Swimming

Unfortunately due to the Local Area moving into Tier 4, the Lifestyle Centre is closed until further notice. Swimming lessons will therefore be placed on hold for the year groups involved.

Current News

You may have heard in the news over the concerns raised by some individuals and unions over the plans to continue to reopen primary schools this week. As I am sure you can imagine, I have been working with the senior leaders in school, to ensure that we have reviewed our risk assessments to ensure that we make the environment as safe as possible. In doing so we will continue to implement what has worked so well for us to date, including regular hand washing, a staggered start and end to the school day, defined bubbles and the wearing of face coverings when on the school grounds by staff, parents and visitors over the age of 12.

However, with the new variant of the virus likely to be in the community, we need to strengthen procedures even more to reduce the risk to all members of the school, community.

On our return on Tuesday the following will apply:

School Office

This will be locked and not accessible in a morning or after school. However, the window to the office will be open to enable communication with the office staff. Where possible parents are asked to communicate via telephone or email. Please note that the new school number is 01606 668066.

Illness

Children displaying **any form of illness** will not be allowed to stay in school. We realise that this is the time of year when colds etc. circulate the most, but having read current guidance on the new strains of Covid-19 children with the virus can have lots of different symptoms. We therefore feel it wise to implement this until the February half term break.

Face Coverings:

These should be worn by **all adults** and children over the age of 12 on entry to site, unless an exemption lanyard is worn. Please wear one to allow staff to be aware who doesn't need to be challenged.



Maintaining a family bubble:

Prior to Christmas it became apparent that some children were 'staying over' at their friends' houses. Under Tier 4 this is not permitted and should be avoided at all costs. We also ask that only family members drop off and collect the children and not family friends.

One Way System:

Please follow the one way system as you enter and exit the site which has been implemented to reduce the spread of the virus.

Social Distancing:

Please adhere to social distancing when entering and exiting the site. This includes no **groups of parents congregating on the car park**, or children who aren't in the same household, walking hand in hand off the site.

Parents on site:

Please note that only **one** parent / carer per family should be on site at any one time. Parents / carers are also asked to simply drop off their children and collect them as quickly as possible, remaining on site for the shortest period of time.

Please also note below the guidance issued by the Local Authority on the return to school:

We understand that some parents and families maybe concerned about the recent government announcements regarding the reopening of schools and the implications for us here in Cheshire West and Chester.

However, the Local Authority is monitoring the situation closely in light of the current information from PHE, including an update on the new COVID variant of concern and any emergent risks. This current information includes:

- No evidence that this variant causes more severe disease or higher mortality.
- The New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG) has moderate confidence that the new variant demonstrates a substantial increase in transmissibility compared to other variants.
- More information on the new variant can be found at: New SARS-CoV-2 variant - GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-sars-cov-2-variant>
- There is no data available to us at a CW&C level on the spread of the new variant. Given the rate of increase we should act as if the new variant is within in our borough and, as a school we will continue to operate our risk assessment processes and follow the national guidance regarding social distancing, face coverings and hand washing.
- The new variant is not expected to impact the performance of the testing processes that are in place.
- No evidence to suggest that the new vaccine would not protect.
- There is no change to infection control measures that are required and this highlights the importance of compliance with national and local control measures.
- PHE are closely monitoring and investigating if there is any potential increase in transmission in children.
- In response to some recent media reports of increased admissions of children and young people with COVID-19, The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health have also made a public statement on 2nd January to reassure parents.
<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-responds-media-reports-increased-admissions-children-young-people-covid-19>

Professor Russell Viner, President of RCPCH said:

'Children's wards are usually busy in winter. As of now we are not seeing significant

pressure from COVID-19 in paediatrics across the UK. As cases in the community rise there will be a small increase in the number of children we see with COVID-19, but the overwhelming majority of children and young people have no symptoms or very mild illness only. The new variant appears to affect all ages and, as yet, we are not seeing any greater severity amongst children and young people.'

The rates in Tier 4 areas in the South where some schools have closed under national DfE instruction have overall community infection rates that are **3 to 4 times worse than Cheshire West and Chester** currently, even though we are within the same Tier, at the time of sending this briefing and the latest national data available. It is also worth noting that the current infection rates in CW&C are the lowest in the 0-9 and 10-17 age ranges.

We ask that all parents follow the aforementioned guidance. If this is done then we will stand the best chance of keeping the school open and safe for all members of the school community.

Attendance

Please note that **we have been advised** that normal attendance is expected for all pupils from Tuesday 5th January 2021. Those children who do not attend without a medical reason or appropriate authorisation, will have their absence classed as unauthorised. Please also note that the staff will be preparing to teach the children in school and will not be in a position to provide home learning for any children whose parents have decided not to return them to school due to the pandemic, without authorisation to do so. However, should a class bubble or year group be sent home by the school due to an outbreak of the virus, then home learning will be provided.

We look forward to welcoming your child(ren) back tomorrow.

Should you have any issues which you wish to discuss with regards to the current situation or school matters, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Mark Joule
Head teacher