



# The William Henry Smith School

01<sup>st</sup> November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you and your families have enjoyed the Half Term break. We are looking forward to the ½ term leading up to Christmas, and are already underway with preparations for a Winter Festival for our school community.

Shortly before the start of our Half Term break, Calderdale Public Health issued new local guidance to schools in relation to Covid mitigation. Covid numbers of positive cases remain very high, with admission to hospitals impacting upon the NHS. Elements of the new local guidance is as follows and this guidance will be reviewed in two weeks:

- **If someone in the household has tested positive for Covid-19 (on LFD or PCR), advise pupils/students to stay at home.** If they develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test straight away. If they don't have symptoms, they should get a PCR test 3-5 days after their household member started with symptoms (or took their test if they had no symptoms). If this test is negative, the child can return to school but must stay at home and arrange another test if they go on to develop symptoms.

Some children are exempt from this advice:

12–16-year-olds who have had at least one dose of the vaccine, more than 14 days ago.

Any child aged between 5-16 who has tested positive for Covid-19 via a PCR test within the past 90 days, but not in the last 10 days.

For parents/carers, the point above, is the most significant change, and I would ask for your cooperation in following this guidance. **Ventilation** is already something we are maximising but will need to balance this with maintaining a reasonable temperature in classrooms. In relation to events and visitors to school we will look at each instance on a case by case basis and either modify the event to mitigate risk or move to online where possible. Thankfully, there is no need to return to full-blown bubbles.

We will not be requesting **face coverings** are re-introduced at this point, as we know this is extremely difficult and detrimental to our students, many of whom are exempt.

**Lateral Flow tests** remain a very important aspect of reducing the spread of the virus and families are gently reminded of the importance of students taking one on **Sunday evening**

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before the return to school, and twice weekly thereafter as we were prior to the holidays (Year 7 and above). If anyone would like any further advice on this then please contact Sara Hill, our school nurse directly.

As a Special School, we are also in the fortunate position that all of our staff have been invited to have their Covid-19 booster vaccination and are actively taking up this offer which will further protect our community. As previously notified, **Covid vaccinations**, for 12-15-year olds are scheduled imminently this month in school. Consent forms have been sent home already and so can we please remind you to return these to school as soon as possible this week.

And finally, families will be aware that the school made several changes to practice following consultation. As part of our review of what has gone well, we also feel that a re-connection between our families and Key Workers would reignite relationships, and therefore current and newly appointed Key Workers will be in touch to arrange a suitable time for a coffee and catch-up visit (we will ensure staff are well before leaving school). We hope that this affords an opportunity to build on relationships, and afford families support.

Best Wishes,

Sue Ackroyd  
Principal

