

I fully appreciate how frustrating the first weeks have proved to you all. Not only are you getting used to new class teams / class bases but also dealing with a lot of different information.

I also realise that a lot of you have the added concerns of family members whether they have symptoms or are being sent home from work/school as a result of others isolating. To say the least we are indeed in the middle of very challenging times. Yet, as ever I have no doubt that we will come through this as we always do.

I am amazed at how quickly the children have settled back and adapted really well to the changes throughout school and college and their happy smiling faces paint a thousand pictures for us all for a happy and positive future.

Making sure that everyone stays safe remains our top priority and given the ever-changing nature of the pandemic what follows is a re-cap and an update on how the recently announced restrictions continue to impact on daily school life for us all.

When should or shouldn't I send my child into school?

Our Flow Chart provides some useful guidance on how to respond as a parent with regards to your child attending school and what actions you need to take under the following circumstances:

- A child having suspected COVID-19 symptoms
- A child testing positive for COVID-19
- A household member having COVID-19 symptoms
- A household member testing positive for COVID-19
- A child has been identified by the school or NHS Test and Trace as a 'close contact'

If none of the above apply and you have had no direct contact with school advising otherwise, then your child should attend school as normal. If in doubt, please contact Sue via school contact number or s.lucas@hope.wigan.sch.uk

What happens if my child feels ill at school ?

Your child does not need a test if they have a runny nose, mild cough or fever, are sneezing, or are generally feeling unwell and do not have a temperature, these are not normally symptoms of coronavirus. You will just need to take the necessary steps before returning to school which could be:

- Rest and recovery at home
- Contact GP
- Recommended medication and/or course of anti-biotics

What happens if /my child gets sent home by the school because we feel they are displaying the following COVID symptoms?

1. a high temperature: any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature)
2. a new continuous cough: coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
3. a loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste: a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal

- Refer to Flow Chart on Hope School and College website

What happens if someone in school tests positive?

- Parents of children in the affected 'Bubble's' (class and/or transport) will be telephoned directly by the school.
- Following up, and in line with Public Health England's guidance we will confirm either that:
 - (i) Your child **has been** identified as a 'close contact' of the infected case with details of what to do next and confirmation of a return to school date; or
 - (ii) Your child **has not been** identified as a 'close contact' of the infected case and should therefore return to school with the next day date given. Please note that the school's test and trace protocols define 'close contact' as:
 - Direct face to face close contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1m, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact [skin to skin]
 - Extended 'proximal' close contact [within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes] with an infected individual
 - Travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person.

We continue to ensure safety measures across school by adhering to protocol and procedures set out in previous letters/ correspondence, so your support in reinforcing the following important messages is much appreciated:

In Class.

- Although, in some cases uniform was a little more relaxed for some pupils during lockdown from September in respect to 'getting back to normal' all pupils will return to wearing their usual school uniform
- Classes will remain in their own base and if they need to transfer to another area they will be supported by a member of staff from their class.
- All classes will keep their bases 'topped up' with all necessary PPE equipment which they will check each day
- Equipment, tables, chairs and touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently and meticulously throughout the day.
- Class will draw up a new 'Code of Conduct' which is usually done at the beginning of a new school year anyway but it will emphasise any 'extra' specific new guidelines we need to implement.
- We also realise that some pupil's may need additional nurture and emotional support back into school and college and we will work with these children and families on an individual basis. (Please let us know if you have any concerns at any time)

Playtimes and

Play times and lunchtimes are staggered. Lunches are will be eaten in class or class-based areas and not altogether in the designated dining areas.

No non-essential visits (Shops etc) for the time being

Unfortunately, we will not be holding assemblies as this is classed as a large gathering until we are advised that we can

We will also not be accessing any offsite provision until it is safe to do so.

Health and Safety.

Additional Health and Safety Procedures include:

- Regular hand sanitizing throughout the day i.e. toileting / changing room / before and after eating before/after using areas such as Busy Bodies/Hall/IT Suite etc using appropriate detergents
- Chairs / tables and surfaces are wiped down throughout the day at the end of each day with appropriate detergents etc
- Frequent cleaning of all touch surfaces on a regular basis within class and on exiting resourced areas – specialist areas busybodies / IT / Hall etc will need to be timetabled
- Class staff ensure any toys / everyday equipment is cleaned at the end of each day
- If appropriate a window will be open for ventilation
- Phones / door handles / wiped throughout the day
- We have enhanced cleaning arrangements in place by our cleaning staff team
- Hope has now installed a Tersano water system which is a safe, effective cleaner and sanitiser in one system
- Fogging done daily on a rota basis throughout school
- Holiday periods are used as always to complete a full deep clean across the provision.
- All outdoor equipment is regularly cleaned
- The school/college/provision is equipped with appropriate PPE equipment

Use of Face Masks

(Information from Wigan Public Health on 22nd September 2020)

The general information of students (Year 7 upwards) and staff wearing face coverings when outside the class base where social distancing cannot be easily maintained is primarily directed at mainstream settings and which we, as a special school setting have to adapt to support the individual needs appropriately

However, if student/staff choose to wear a mask then we will support this whole heartedly. The exact wording from the local authority is:

The default position for areas in national government intervention is that education and childcare settings will remain open. An area moving into national intervention with restrictions short of education and childcare closure is described as 'tier 1'. There are no changes to childcare, and the only difference in education settings is that where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults and pupils when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing cannot easily be maintained.

Some individuals are exempt from wearing face coverings. This applies to those who:

- cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment or disability
- speak to or provide assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expression to communicate

Face masks are always worn by staff within our more vulnerable classes where they need to support and administer clinical and medical procedures and practices throughout the day.

It is also a personal choice for any member of staff who wishes to wear a face mask when they are conducting their daily duties throughout the day

Once again can I reiterate that Hope School provisions are blessed with wonderful pupils, parents and staff who continuously work together to unite and support each other.

As always, any questions or queries that you might have relating to the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sue Lucas