



Federation of Pinvin C of E First School and St Nicholas C of E Middle School

Main Street, Pinvin, Worcestershire WR10 2ER

Federation Head teacher: Mrs Sandra Jennings

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04th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Firstly, can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy New Year. I hope that you managed to get some rest over the festive period and enjoyed a peaceful time, albeit only with your immediate family.

Over the past 2 days there has been much speculation about schools and the safety of children returning to school. SAGE and the Teaching Unions have also been recommending that schools delayed the start of the term. I would like to reassure you that my main priority is to keep both our schools open, providing that we feel it is safe for all involved. Over this weekend, I have been in contact with all staff and whilst all of them are much more anxious this time round, most are prepared to come into work and not take their union advice because they recognise the effect that closing the schools would have on our children and families. A few staff however, are following advice and we respect their right to do so and understand that it is a difficult choice for everyone to make. Therefore, Years R to Year 6 will be returning as planned on Tuesday 5th January and Year 7 on Monday 18th January as per government direction. Consent forms for children in Year 7 to access the lateral flow tests will follow this week.

I would like to reassure yourselves and our staff that we are continuing to do all we can in school to keep everyone as safe as possible. As the new variant is known to spread more easily and often does not present with the 3 main symptoms, we have made further adjustments to our risk assessment and procedures in order to try and further minimise risk as much as possible. I know that this is not going to be an easy term and bubble closures are probably likely to happen, (and the government could still give out new guidance at any time,) but, we will continue to support yourselves and the children to the best of our ability and within our limitations.

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Please be aware that children who are instructed to remote learn (e.g. Year 7 currently until 18/1/21) and children who have to isolate will be able to access remote learning via google classroom. If you choose to keep your child at home of your own accord then school is not responsible or obliged to provide learning. Also, please be aware that absence will not be authorised, however I understand everyone has a difficult decision to make, therefore if you wish to discuss this, please contact myself via the school office.

We will be continuing with all procedures we had in place prior to Christmas plus the additional measures we have implemented as below:

- Secondary age children (Year 7) are being offered lateral flow testing on return to school and serial testing after a positive contact which would mean that they had a daily test for 7 days and would not have to isolate from school unless positive. The government aim to roll this option out to Primary age children late January/early Feb, however currently this is only accessible to Year 7.
- Staff in school are also being offered the weekly tests.
- The recommendation is that staff in school will be wearing face coverings (masks not visors) at all times, including in the classroom. Please make your children aware.
- We recommend all children using school transport wear masks, however this **is mandatory** for Year 7. If at all possible, our recommendation would be that, if you are able to get children to school safely yourselves you should do so, as this may reduce the chances of them having to isolate. However, we totally understand that for many of you school transport is the only option, hence our recommendation above. Year 7 children **MUST** have their own mask to wear in school when not in the classroom i.e. the corridors / toilets or where they are in larger groups such as the playground **EVERY** day. It is parental responsibility to ensure that ALL Y7 children do have a mask. School are unable to supply these, so please expect a phone call to bring one in if your child does not have one. Any other children in other groups who wish to wear a mask, may do so.
- The new variant is 70% more transmissible and 1 in 3 children are asymptomatic (they do not have the 3 main COVID symptoms on onset,) therefore staff are required to be even more vigilant, and children will be sent home if they are unwell and advised to take a test. We recognise that this is disruptive to daily life and somewhat inconvenient, however we all have an important part to play in trying to help control the virus, keep people safe and hopefully keep the school community open. Please do not send your child to school if you know that they are feeling unwell.

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- We have cancelled wrap around care for 2 weeks in the first instance to reduce crossover of bubbles and minimise risks in this uncertain period of time. We will reinstate this as soon as we feel it is safe to do so.
- Unfortunately, due to further restrictions, PE lessons will all need to be outdoors for the foreseeable future. Please ensure your child has the correct kit and warm jumpers and appropriate footwear. In the case of extreme weather, children may sometimes have a theory PE lesson.
- No parents or external visitors will be allowed into school under any circumstances until further notice. (SEND professionals booked for the first two weeks of this term will be rescheduled and this will be reassessed on a regular basis)
- Children and staff are constantly being reminded of importance of maintaining the 2m rule between them and the personal hygiene requirements are constantly reinforced. Staff will continue to support individual children, however this will be done under the guidance provided and is for limited periods of time.

Final Reminders.

- Please ensure that you are wearing face coverings when dropping off / collecting your children from school at all times. First school parents will not be allowed onto the playground if they are not wearing a mask.
- Staggered finish times will remain the same, please ensure you arrive at the correct time to pick up your child / children and not arrive early or late to reduce congestion.
- It is extremely important that parents vacate the premises immediately and do not stop around chatting to other parents as this increases the risk of transition.
- Please do not park in the turning circle as the buses are arriving at various times and parking here causes disruption to the end of day arrangements and is very dangerous practice.
- Please inform school immediately if you, your child or immediate household has been in close contact or tested positive so that we can adhere to the track and trace regulations.
- Also, if anyone in your household is awaiting a test result, you should all be following the 10-day isolation ruling.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding in these difficult times.

Yours sincerely
Sandra Jennings
Federation Headteacher

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