

04/01/2022

## **Dear Families,**

### **Update**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support in 2021 and express my very best wishes for 2022.

I have been pleased to see how well our Trust-wide literacy strategy has taken off in each of our schools. We have a common word of the week delivered in all our schools using the same teaching method, which is helping our students develop and use their vocabulary.

Thank you to all families who took part in the family survey. I will be using those results to identify areas of success and areas we need to work on in the short to medium term to serve our students best. We are fully aware that some of the students need additional support following the disruption to education over the last few years.

We will start working on a range of strategic projects across all our schools over the next six months. We will be working on our sixth form curriculum, our partnerships with alternative providers, the professional development on offer for all our staff, and reviewing how best to manage our buildings to support teaching and learning. We will continue to develop and improve, despite the pandemic, to ensure we provide our students with the best opportunities and experiences.

We have also been thinking hard about what motivates young people and adults and how to develop intrinsic motivation. Every employee and student within The Two Counties Trust has a sentence that describes the legacy they wish to create. Please ask your child about the word of the week and their sentence. This approach has been taken from a book called Drive by Daniel Pink.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being in classrooms and meeting our students over the last term. They are, of course, the reason we all get out of bed each morning and do what we do. We must keep our ambitions and aspirations high for the next generation whilst providing the scaffolds they may need to be successful. I know being a student, parent, or teacher in the current climate is challenging, but I am also sure that by working together, we can maximise our students' life choices.

Please see below some general updates about Covid-19. They are important messages, and further details will be provided as appropriate by Headteachers for individual schools within our Trust.

### **Covid-19 testing**

- Our schools have arranged a programme to ensure that all students are offered an on-site test when they return to school. The Department for Education strongly encourages students to continue testing twice weekly at home and report all results to NHS Test and Trace and their setting.
- Each of our schools will have sent families a communication about how testing will operate. Any questions, please get in touch with your child's school.

### **Covid-19 mitigations**

- Face coverings must be worn indoors, including classrooms, when students return to school in January. This is in line with the Department for Education guidance issued over the festive break. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will remain in place until 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point the guidance will be reviewed at a national level. If your child is exempt from wearing a face covering, please liaise directly with the school so that we can consider any additional mitigations that might be needed to reduce risk for all.

## **Covid-19 self-isolation**

- Since Wednesday 22 December 2021, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.
- Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative results from these tests are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and the person does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school on or after day 7.

Staff absence is almost inevitable given the current levels of infection. Due to this, schools may not be able to respond to everything in normal timescales; however, we will always prioritise safeguarding and the delivery of lessons to students.

Thank you for your continued understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,

*W.J. Davies*

**Wesley Davies**

**Chief Executive Officer**

