



Head Teacher: Jane Reason

14 January 2022

Our Reference: COVID 14122

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back to a new term. My letter has been delayed because I contracted COVID at the end of the Christmas break so have not been in school. However, in my absence I am also aware that we have had an increased number of COVID infections in school this term, highlighting how important it is that all of us do our best to reduce transmission and limit the impact of this pandemic on the education of our children.

Vacancy on our Local Governing Body

We have a parent/carer vacancy on our governing body. If anyone is interested in being more involved with the school and the education we offer, please contact myself or Nancy Sinclair (staff Governor) to find out more about the role. We can also put you in touch with our other parent governor (David Openshaw) if you would like to discuss it with him.

New COVID Guidance

In line with the new guidance from the Government and Local Authority on how best to manage infections in school and on Covid testing and isolation periods I felt it important to write to you and highlight the impact of these changes in school. Our updated risk assessment can be found on the website (www.TheAlbany.school). The key changes in our risk management plan and the guidance from government are detailed below.

1. Wearing of face coverings in schools

All staff and students in secondary settings are expected to wear face coverings at all times throughout the day unless exempt on medical grounds. This applies to in classrooms and when walking around the school. Students are also expected to wear face coverings when travelling to and from school in taxis or on public transport.

We recognise that face coverings can sometimes add to the pressures on students and make it difficult for both staff and students to interpret meaning accurately from body language and speech. Therefore, masks may not always be appropriate. However, all students should expect to be asked to wear them in school.

If your child is exempt, please let the school know.

2. What to do if your child tests positive for COVID

At all times students should be LFD testing at least twice weekly. If they have no symptoms but test positive for COVID they must not come to school and should self-isolate as per the guidelines for those with COVID. The positive test should be reported (<https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>).

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home and take an LFD test. If they have COVID symptoms then they should take a PCR test and isolate until the result is known.

Any student who tests positive for COVID, either via an LFD test or a PCR test, needs to self-isolate. This will be for a minimum of 5 full days from onset of symptoms. If feeling better or symptomless, you should begin LFD testing on the morning of day 5. Once the person with COVID has had two negative LFD tests, at least 24 hours apart (eg day 5 and day 6), they can come out of isolation. These tests need to be reported to NHS Test and Trace. I would not recommend a child who has contracted COVID returns to school until they feel well. This may be after they test negative and can come out of isolation.



Only unvaccinated adults in the same household as someone with COVID will need to self-isolate (for 10 days) as they are close contacts. Siblings will not need to unless they test positive. Any fully vaccinated adult or sibling (under 18 years and 6 months and older than 5) will need to LFD test daily for 7 days.

3. *Blended Learning and Staggered Start and Finish Times*

Please be aware that we may need to move to a reduction of students on site and staggered start and finish each day to facilitate social distancing to reduce the spread of the virus within school. However, we hope to be able to avoid this as much as possible. We may also need to blended learning if staffing levels are impacted significantly by COVID or other winter illnesses. Students should all have a Microsoft TEAMS log in and a work pack at home. They may also have access to online learning resources. As the decision to move to blended learning could be made as an urgent response to a critical situation, parents and carers are asked to check that their children still have the work pack and TEAMS app on their phone. Please see the letter dated 29 November 2021 for the timetable for Blended Learning. This can be found on our website (www.TheAlbany.school).

New Staff

In other news, we have welcomed new staff to The Albany this term. Natasha Buckley has joined us as a Learning Support Assistant and Adele Grimwood as our Family Engagement Leader. Jodie Hamlin has taken on a new post as our Student Wellbeing Support Assistant. Fraser Garner and Liz Fordham have also joined the staff as Learning Support Assistants having worked with us on supply last term.

Thank you for your continued support. We are all hoping this year will be less disrupted than the previous two years have been.

Yours sincerely



Jane Reason
Headteacher

