

8th December 2020

Dear parent/carer

Reminder of Coronavirus protocols in the academy

Writing this on the day when the first Coronavirus vaccines are being administered across the UK, I am reminded of the ingenuity of those who have been responsible for its development. At the same time, as the year draws to a close, along with many others, I find myself reflecting on what has been an exceptional one. As the Principal said in his introduction to last week's edition of *Nuntiator*, our weekly newsletter to parents and carers, it seems that with the roll-out of the vaccine a new and hopeful dawn is breaking and, like you, I look forward to the day when life can return to normal.

In the meantime, it remains essential to continue to follow the guidance from national and local government and, particularly relevant to us in an educational setting, the guidance from the Department for Education. I wanted to take this opportunity today to send a few reminders which apply to all Pimlico Academy students. Please take some time to read the points carefully and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to discuss the matter further with you.

The academy's Coronavirus Risk Assessment, drafted in conjunction with an independent Health and Safety consultant, is updated in line with changes to guidance from the UK Government or alterations to local authority guidance, as well as the guidance from the Department for Education.

I would like to draw your attention to the main points in it which pertain to students here at the academy:

- All students must bring a face mask to the academy every day. Failure to do so will be dealt with according to the Covid Addendum to the academy's Behaviour Policy, which you will find at the end of this letter. The Addendum designates failure to bring a face mask as a 'lack of equipment' for which a 30-minute detention will be issued to students. Students will be issued with a disposable face mask for use that day.
- Face masks are to be put on before a student crosses the threshold of the academy and must be worn in corridors, while queuing for lunch in the dining room, and in communal areas where social distancing is impossible to maintain.

- Face masks are not worn in classrooms. This is in line with the Department for Education Guidance, updated last on 27th November 2020, which states: *“On the basis of current evidence, in light of the mitigating measures education settings are taking, and the negative impact on communication, face coverings will not generally be necessary in the classroom even where social distancing is not possible... Face coverings can have a negative impact on learning and teaching and so their use in the classroom should be avoided”*. For the same reasons, face coverings are not worn for year assemblies, where social distancing between form groups is in place and extra ventilation minimises risk.
- As the DfE document of the 27th November 2020 points out, safe wearing of face coverings requires cleaning of hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and the safe storage of them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Where a face covering becomes damp, it should not be worn and the face covering should be replaced carefully. We ask all parents to ensure that students have access to a clean face mask each day and that they carry a spare one with them where possible.
- When face masks are worn, they must cover both the nose and mouth. Students can choose to wear a disposal mask or a reusable mask, but the latter should be plain coloured and not overly-styled.
- If a child is exempt from wearing a face mask, a letter from a certified health professional will be required to prove this. Please send these to your child’s Head of Year.
- Hand sanitiser is available at various points around the academy for student use and students are encouraged by staff to use it as they arrive in the morning to the academy, when entering a classroom and upon leaving it, before eating, and whenever students feel they need to. Students can, of course, bring their own hand sanitiser with them to use.
- If your child tests positive for Coronavirus, please inform us as soon as possible by telephone or, at the weekend, by email. If a student begins to feel unwell with Coronavirus symptoms while at school, we have a robust system in place for isolating them and will make contact with a parent or carer speedily.
- Students who are identified as possible close contacts of a confirmed case of Coronavirus will be isolated and contact made with home before the child leaves the academy. Students who are self-isolating because of close contact with a confirmed case will be given a workbook to complete which contains around 5-6 days’ of work in the core subjects. Thereafter, and until their time of self-isolation is complete, students will have work set for them by their teachers via Microsoft Teams. Students or parents with concerns or queries about remote learning should contact their child’s Head of Year in the first instance.

Many of our students arrive to school by public transport and we ask for your support in ensuring that they wear face coverings while travelling. We would also ask that you speak to your child/ren about the importance of social distancing when around the community and of following the Coronavirus protocols we have in place to protect our students, staff and the wider academy community. Thank you, as always, for your support.

With very best wishes,

Tony Oulton

Senior Vice Principal

Coronavirus Addendum to the Pimlico Academy Behaviour Policy

Updated: 8th December 2020

- i. Students who fail to bring a face mask to the academy with them will be given a 30-minute detention at the end of the academy day for failure to have with them an essential item on the academy equipment list.
- ii. Students who are found to have been in serious breach of the academy's Coronavirus protocols will be dealt with according to the academy's Behaviour Policy and sanctions issued according to the seriousness of the case, up to and including fixed-term exclusions.