



# Aldercar High School

## In pursuit of excellence

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Headteacher: Mrs C Hatto

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

I hope that this letter finds both you and your families as well as possible.

I am writing to thank you for all of your support since the start of the term. I am pleased to see that both attendance and punctuality to school have improved for the majority of students from this time last year despite the challenges that COVID-19 continues to pose to us. In addition, students have returned to school with fantastic attitudes to learning and we are also delighted by the way that students look in their school uniform.

As a school we are committed to learning continuing for students who are absent from school for any reason. As a school we will continue to provide a remote education for pupils to continue their learning at home, details of which can be found on our website.

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now a need to reduce the disruption to children's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and adults have been offered vaccinations.

With the evidence being clear that school closures cause significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health - the government's priority is to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. However, please note that all schools are required to have an Outbreak Management Plan (OMP) which re-instates COVID-19 control measures if advised to do so by the local Public Health team - several confirmed cases within 10 days, may be considered to be an outbreak.

### **Mixing and 'bubbles'**

- Students are no longer required to be in 'bubbles' however our OMP covers the possibility that it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.
- Currently, students arrive to school at the same time but with Years 7 and 8 arriving through the Reception gates and all other year groups arriving through the Sports Hall gates. Students then depart school via their nearest exit to their last lesson of the day.
- In order to reduce congestion at breaks and lunchtimes, we have staggered year groups so that approximately half of the school are on at any one time.

With all students arriving to and leaving from school at the same time, we would like your help in reminding students to be careful when crossing the busy roads and to be respectful of our neighbours. In addition, if students are picked up away from school, this will ease congestion around the local area.

### **Suspected cases of COVID-19 in school**

If someone in school develops COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>), however mild, they will be sent home immediately and told to follow Stay at Home Guidance.

All employees, pupils and visitors will be advised to follow - Stay at Home Guidance if they:

- have symptoms of COVID-19;

- have received a positive COVID-19 test result (whether or not they have symptoms);
- live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms, or with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

However, you are no longer required to self-isolate if you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 and any of the following apply:

- you are fully vaccinated;
- you are below the age of 18 years 6 months;
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial ;
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

#### **Tracing close contacts and isolation**

- Close contacts should now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. If students are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and informed that they have been in close contact with a positive case, they will be advised to take a PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.
- In order to best protect our school and community, we have taken the decision that for the foreseeable future, school will offer daily testing for the following 7 days to those students who are considered to have been close contacts to anyone who has tested positive. If students do not have consent for this to be done at school we ask that students engage with the same process at home.

#### **Face coverings**

- The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet.
- Students and staff will be supported if they exercise a personal choice to continue to wear a face covering. Our OMP covers the possibility that it may become necessary to reintroduce the request for parents to wear a face covering when on the school grounds.

#### **COVID-19 Hygiene Control Measures**

- Hand Hygiene - frequent and thorough hand washing/sanitising is now regular practice and will continue.
- Respiratory Hygiene - the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. We have bins in all rooms.
- Cleaning Schedule - enhanced cleaning will remain with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.
- Ventilation - we will continue to ensure the school is well ventilated. When we approach the colder months, children will be encouraged to add layers.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the remaining Inset days which may be differently placed to previous years. These are planned for:

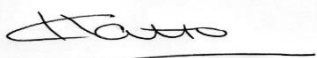
Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Thank you very much for the invaluable support that we have received over the last few days and I look forward to working closely with you throughout this academic year.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C Hatto (Head Teacher)