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Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year! I hope you had a good Christmas break and managed to enjoy some time with your family and friends.

Before the children return, I'd like to update you on a few items with regards to Covid-19.

As of Wednesday 5th January, **all pupils are expected to be in school as usual**. We will continue to work hard to make lessons as valuable as possible and to help pupils catch up with any learning gaps resulting from the impact of Covid-19. Trips and clubs (starting w/b 10th January) and other enrichment activities will continue as will the (paid) breakfast and after-school clubs. While the intention is to continue with business as usual, we do need to be aware of new challenges posed by the Omicron variant.

Omicron – impact on staffing

Omicron cases are high; the government has warned that in the new year school staff absence is likely to be high too. The government are allowing staff to return after 7 days (if they have 2 negative lateral flow tests 24 hours apart) which may help, but clearly staffing will become an issue for many schools.

Northfield Manor already has plans in place to manage the impact of omicron on staffing which include the following:

- Prioritising additional non-class-based staff for cover (including a new teaching member of staff employed from January for this purpose)
- teachers live streaming from home to the classroom should they need to isolate but be well enough to teach
- use of our experienced and well-trained teaching assistants to take classes
- supply teachers should any be available

These plans will remain under review. Should staff absence be impacted to the point where we cannot guarantee the safety of pupils, I would of course inform you as soon as possible. Closing any part of the school would always be the very last resort and something I would obviously avoid.

Communication with school

It is essential that we maintain our administration staffing. In order to reduce the risk of spread, do not come to the school office unless by prior appointment - telephone or email first. An appointment will be made for you should you need to come into the building.

If your child is late (without prior notice) you will need to knock or ring the bell outside the main office and a member of staff will come out to you. Please remember that persistent lateness is a child safeguarding issue and all children should arrive promptly for the start of the school day. This is also the case for end of day arrangements, including prompt collection after clubs.

It is vital that the school can contact you quickly should your child be ill. **Check that we have your latest phone number and email address.**

Covid-19 Symptoms reminder

Do not send your child to school if they develop symptoms. The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Children under 18 years and 6 months do not need to isolate if they are identified as a 'close contact'. If you are unsure whether your child should isolate, please contact the school office for clarification.

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions or queries do not hesitate to contact me through the enquiry@northfieldmanoracademy.org.uk.

Very best wishes for 2022.

Yours faithfully
Mrs Pennington
Headteacher

Email: enquiry@northfieldmanoracademy.org.uk
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