



The Westminster School

Safe, Happy and Learning Together

Head Teacher Mr O Flowers
Hawes Lane
Rowley Regis
West Midlands B65 9AL
Tel: 0121 561 6884
Fax: 0121 561 6885
www.thewestminsterschool.co.uk

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Dear Parents/Carers

COVID Whole School Closure Update

Following a turbulent weekend of COVID impacting upon the school community, we have since been working with Public Health and Sandwell Local Authority. We have also conducted our own operational impact assessment based on the volume of people who are unable to come to work for a variety of COVID related reasons. 45% of the entire teaching workforce are unable to come to school until at least 12 July 2021, which I am sure you can appreciate has a profound impact on the safe and effective opening of the school.

In addition to the capacity challenges, we are seeing community transmission at a higher rate than ever before. Over the past two weeks we have seen a significant rise in the amount of confirmed positive cases and subsequently the impact of isolations has been formidable. We are therefore at operational breaking-point and it is no longer safe to remain open for the remainder of the week.

As a consequence, the school will continue to be closed for Monday 5 July 2021 up to and including Friday 9 July 2021 to all staff and pupils.

In the face of adversity, this has been a difficult decision to make. I understand the impact this has on our young people and their families, however I will not compromise the safety of our young people and staff during these challenging times and in turn I appreciate your help, support, understanding and patience.

This period of school closure will allow for a return to a safe level of operational capacity as staff return from isolation. It will put a circuit-breaker to limit any continued transmission throughout the school community and stop the spread of the virus. **The school will reopen again on Monday 12 July 2021 for all staff and pupils.**

If your young person develops symptoms as detailed below and they are unwell, please inform the school either via telephone or email and arrange a PCR test through <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

The growing range of symptoms are as follows:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
- headaches
- aches and pains
- feeling very tired for no good reason
- sore throat
- runny nose



- sneezing
- tummy ache/upset tummy in children.

If your child tests positive, please ring the school on 0121 561 6884 and let us know.

The previous advice relating to the isolation of Malvern, Wenlock, 9.1 and Transport Route 8 still stand. These groups are to isolate upto and including Saturday 10 July 2021. Pupils will then be able to come out of isolation on Sunday 11 July 2021 and will be able to return to school if they are healthy and well on Monday 12 July 2021. This advice has been given to us by Public Health England, Public Health Sandwell and the Local Authority and the decision has been made to keep everyone safe and further limit the spread of COVID throughout the school community.

If you are eligible for free school meals, you will have received information from us about our voucher scheme and these will be coming out to you within the next 24 hours to spend at a local supermarket of your choice. We will also be conducting welfare calls to a select number of families in the coming days to ensure everyone is safe and well.

Live lessons will continue throughout this period through Microsoft Teams and Evidence for Learning (EfL) or our YouTube channel. If you have any queries regarding EfL or accessing the content, please contact us services@westminster.sandwell.sch.uk. We have a supply of digital devices and we will get these out to the families who need them the most.

If you have any further concerns or questions, please contact the Senior Leadership Team on headteacher@westminster.sandwell.sch.uk.

Thank you for your continued help and support.

Yours faithfully

Mr O M Flowers
Head Teacher