



3 September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I do hope that you have had a great summer and that your children are excited about returning to school next week. The staff are really looking forward to seeing the children and are preparing some exciting activities to engage them inside and outside of the classroom.

We have new guidance from the government which encourages us to get back to a more normal arrangement in our schools putting the education of children as our first priority. We are of course delighted to do this but also feel that we were so successful last year in our Infection Control measures that we do not want to give these up entirely and plan to take a cautious approach to returning to school.

We will continue to encourage children to maintain good hand hygiene and to wash their hands frequently and we will also continue to supply hand sanitiser. We will maintain enhanced cleaning routines and will clean equipment and contact points around the school regularly throughout the school day. We will also take particular care to ensure that the building is well ventilated and that children continue to use safe spacing where appropriate. Although the government's notion of 'bubbles' will cease, our schools will continue to work mainly in classes/year groups where this is not having a negative impact on children's education. Staff will continue to wear masks when they are meeting with parents and the general public if they wish to and we will continue to ask that any visitors to the school wear masks inside the school, in communal areas as we did last year. Our staff will continue to take Lateral Flow tests twice a week as will secondary aged pupils and will be advised to get a PCR test if their result is positive and to stay at home until they have the results of the PCR test.

As there is currently no self-isolating for children you should only keep your children at home if they have had a positive COVID Test or are unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19.

The new structure is that local NHS track and trace teams and not schools will let you know if there is a requirement to test or to isolate:

- if your child has been identified as a close contact of a person who has tested positive the Track and Trace service will contact you and request that your child has a PCR test;
- if a member of your family has symptoms or a positive test you should all get a test but only the person with symptoms and adults who have not been vaccinated should isolate until they have the results;
- all children should continue to attend school as normal unless they have a positive test result, have symptoms or are unwell.
- schools will co-operate with the Local Track and Trace teams as required;

I am very hopeful that we can return to a 'New Normal' where we can reflect on all the learning of the last eighteen months and provide your children with a high-quality face to face education in an environment that is as safe as we can make it. We are aware however that the pandemic is not over and thus will be vigilant and we have plans that we will put in place in partnership with the Public Health Teams if there is a local outbreak.

We all look forward to welcoming your children back to school next week.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs S M Samson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs S M Samson
Chief Executive Officer
University of Chichester Academy Trust