



22 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of our first half term I would like to keep you all up to date with recent and forthcoming changes as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

I was really sad and disappointing to have to send all Year 7 -11 students home to isolate for 14 days. This was a very difficult decision and one that no headteacher wants to make. We were so happy to have all students back in school and up to that point our control measures seemed to be having the desired effect of controlling the virus within the school. However, unfortunately, this incident demonstrated that in spite of all the control measures we had put in place we cannot prevent an outbreak completely. We are not a virus control centre, we are a school trying to control a virus whilst trying to provide a meaningful education for all our students.

However, there are changes we would like to make to tighten our control measures even further which will be implemented from November 2nd.

Changes to break time and lunchtime arrangements

We will be introducing a swipe card system for payment of lunches rather than fingerprints. This means your child will be issued with a personalised swipe card to use when purchasing food instead of their fingerprints. We believe this will reduce the risk of transmission as students will not be using their thumbs on the same machine as other students. It will also speed up the payment process as sometimes thumbprints don't always read quickly.

There will be no cost attached to this change, however, if your child loses their card there will be a replacement cost of £3.50.

Face Masks

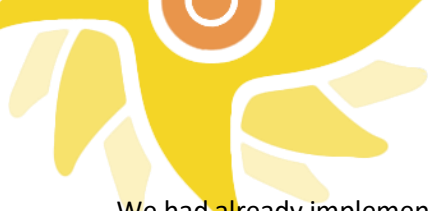
As you will be aware, Glossopdale has been placed in the High alert level of the new three-tier lockdown system; this means that the wearing of face masks in school is of vital importance.

The Department for Education advice issued on October 16th 2020 states the following:

Consistent with the WHO (World Health Organisation) new advice, schools should take additional precautionary measures in areas where the transmission of the virus is defined as either high or very high under the [local COVID alert level framework](#).

“When an area moves to the local COVID alert level ‘high’ or ‘very high’, in education settings where Year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education#>



We had already implemented the wearing of face masks as a precaution but it is now crucial that students wear their masks when moving around the school; this also includes when they are not eating at break and lunch times.

The majority of students have been excellent in remembering to bring and wear their masks in school and we commend them for their responsibility and maturity. For the safety of all students and staff, **please can you ensure that your child brings a mask to school** (or multiple masks if you are using disposable masks) so that they always have them on their person. A small number of students are forgetting or losing them and we do not want to run low on supplies in school. We have shared the purpose of our decision with students: them wearing a face mask is a respectful and responsible act to protect peers and staff. While we have thankfully had a very small number of students failing to follow our expectations, we will have to introduce sanctions for those who refuse to follow our instructions in order to protect others. Please can you take the time to discuss this with your children and explain the reason why this is so important; thank you for your support.

It's also pertinent to remind parents of the process to follow if your child or a family member develops symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19.

What to do if your child has Covid symptoms

Please do not send your child into school if they are displaying any of the 3 common Covid-19 symptoms. These are:

1. a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
2. a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
3. a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If a child presents these symptoms at school, we will send them home. If they already have them before setting off for school, please keep them at home and let us know.

Our 'what to do' guide is here:

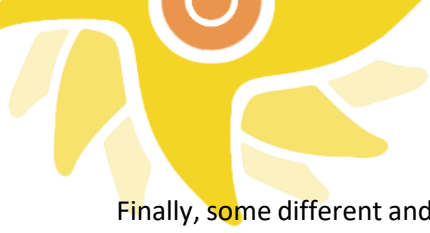
[https://www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk/docs/Attendance -
_what_to_do_for_parents_carers_Sept_2020.pdf](https://www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk/docs/Attendance_-_what_to_do_for_parents_carers_Sept_2020.pdf)

What to do if your child tests positive

If your child has a positive Covid test result it is critical that you inform the school as soon as you receive confirmation. In the case of a positive test can you please email the school directly at covidpositivetest@glossopdale.school. This applies to out of school hours, weekends and during school holidays. We need to know this as soon as possible in order to track and trace anyone that may have come into contact with your child.

In the event of a positive test result that comes into the school overnight, at the weekend or in the school holidays, we may have to contact the parents and carers of students in that child's bubble to initially ask you to keep your child at home while we track and trace who had been in close or extended contact with them. Once we have done this we will hopefully be able to identify those who will need to self-isolate and those who can come back into school.

Thank you for your support and understanding throughout these really difficult times as we endeavour to do our utmost to reduce the risk of transmission and keep as many children and staff safe and in school.



Finally, some different and positive news. On September 29th the school had an Ofsted visit as part of their work into how England's education system is managing the return to full education for students, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic

Ofsted's visits to schools during the autumn term are not inspections. They are not giving graded judgements. The information from this visit will feed into Ofsted's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector.

The letter can be found on our website here [Ofsted](#).

Finally, I wish you all a good half term break and we look forward to welcoming all our students back on Monday 2nd November.

Best wishes

Debbie McGloin
Executive Headteacher