

Dear Parents/Carers,

A warm welcome to those of you who joined us this year and a greeting and welcome back to the rest of our George Eliot Family.

As you know, we have up until now had 3 year groups back for induction (Please check our website on <http://www.george-eliot.warwickshire.sch.uk/AutumnTerm2020> if you are not sure when your child should be back), we look forward to welcoming the rest of the year groups next week.

We have been really pleased with the way that staff and pupils have come back to work and adjusted to the new ways of working and are delighted with the positive feedback we have received. I am grateful for your thank you messages, it is so lovely and heart-warming to read them.

Having reviewed the most recent government guidance which we received on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August and in light of our initial observations of staff and pupils on site we are going to be implementing the following changes to our guidance:

**Face coverings-** From Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September **we recommend and encourage all staff and pupils to wear a face covering in corridors, canteens, changing rooms and other indoor, communal areas where social distancing is more difficult.** A face covering worn at school **should be plain, with minimal pattern/print.**

When this is not the case an alternative will be provided by the academy for the day only. We would ask that you read the government guidance on the safe use and wearing of face coverings.

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering).

All pupils are recommended to carry face coverings as they will need them on transport and in shops. Parents and pupils are reminded that the wearing of a face covering is an additional measure and all other measures must remain in place.

**Uniform-** We are encouraging all of our pupils to be back in full uniform (<http://www.george-eliot.warwickshire.sch.uk/school-uniform>) as soon as possible, following the government changes to the guidance for school. We understand that with the change of season, it is much easier and more economical, to have the blazer rather than buying new coats. Therefore, as full uniform will be compulsory from after October half-term, this should provide parents enough time to make any necessary orders or purchases.

#### **Testing and Shielding-**

May I bring your attention to the guidance I received yesterday from DFE regarding testing and shielding at school.

The government guidance on **Testing** is as below:

*“To ensure we identify those with coronavirus while avoiding a huge increase in demand for tests from people without coronavirus symptoms, we ask that you recommend to your pupils and staff who feel unwell, that they get tested if:*

- *they develop one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms:*
  - *a high temperature*

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- a new, continuous cough
- the loss or change of their sense of taste or smell, or
- they are recommended to get tested by a healthcare provider (e.g. GP or nurse)

*If a pupil or staff member develops one or more of the main coronavirus symptoms described above, only they should be tested. There is no need for their households to have a test, unless they are also symptomatic. Unless a pupil or staff member has one of the three main coronavirus symptoms, they should only be tested if instructed otherwise by the local authority, health protection team or their GP.”*

The government guidance on **Shielding** is as below:

*“We now know much more about coronavirus (COVID-19). Except in areas with local lockdown restrictions shielding advice was paused on 1 August 2020 which means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school or college, as can those who have family members who were shielding.*

*Specialists in paediatric medicine have reviewed the latest evidence on the level of risk posed to children and young people from coronavirus (COVID-19). The latest evidence indicates that the risk of serious illness for most children and young people is low. In the future, we expect fewer children and young people will be included on the shielded patient list and far fewer children and young people will be advised to shield whenever community transmission rates are high.*

*However children and young people will only be removed from the shielding patient list by their GP or specialist, following consultation with the child or young person and their family, and other clinicians where appropriate. So children or young people who received a shielding advisory letter early in the epidemic will be encouraged to talk this through with their GP or specialist at their next appointment. For those few children or young people who do need to remain on the shielding list for the longer term, details will be retained so that they and their families can be assured they will be contacted again should community transmission rates rise in the future.*

*Therefore, schools and colleges should welcome back children and young people who have previously been shielding unless they are:*

- in a local lockdown area with specific shielding restrictions, or
- have been advised to self-isolate because they, their family or a close contact have COVID-19 infection, or
- they have recently been specifically advised to remain off school or college – for example with a new serious diagnosis such as active cancer”

To support the education of our pupils, any child who has to shield or is self-isolating will have full access to our remote learning material and will be working from home.

Thank you for all your hard work as parents/guardians and also for supporting and trusting us to deliver the very best education to your children.

Kind regards



Mrs H Zakary, Principal

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