

3rd December 2021

Dear parent

End of term letter, December 2021

A lot has happened since I last wrote to you. There have been challenges this term but, overall, we think it has been a great success. It is easy to forget it was only in September we were able to resume education without 'bubbles' and start reintroducing our full offer, including a range of extra-curricular activities. Thank-you, once again, for your support and trust.

The government have now decided we need to reintroduce some safety measures. This is because they are concerned about the Omicron variant. Three particularly significant changes were introduced this week:

- Secondary pupils and staff should wear face coverings in busy spaces, such as corridors and social areas.
- Anybody identified as a close contact of a person with the Omicron variant will now have to isolate for ten days, regardless of vaccination status.
- Anybody arriving in this country from abroad must self-isolate until they receive a negative PCR test result.

The press highlighted face coverings but it is the second change that could have the biggest impact, depending on infection rates. We remain ready to deliver remote or blended (remote and classroom) lessons if required. Please let staff know if you need help accessing the technology. The additional checks for people arriving from abroad could also have implications for family holidays. I understand some of you may already have booked holidays but please think very carefully before booking anything that would now require your child to isolate during term time.

More detailed guidance is available here:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-and-support)



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You can follow a link to advice for parents of children in schools and early years settings and there are also links to guidance on international travel.

We will continue to follow the government guidance, as we have done throughout the pandemic. This is an approach you have steadfastly supported throughout the last two years. There may be a sense of restrictions fatigue setting in now but I know you will share our desire to take any steps necessary to avoid more serious measures being introduced later in the winter. Pupils have already responded positively to requests to wear face coverings and I am very grateful for your support.

The government guidance is very clear that we should continue to provide the full educational experience for our pupils. We all know previous lockdowns have been particularly difficult for children and young adults. It is therefore very important pupils continue to attend school, unless required to isolate or suffering from another illness. Our attendance policies will remain fully in place.

Please note we will also be required to offer COVID tests in secondary schools when we return from the Christmas break. Secondary pupils should also test themselves before returning to school. This will help enormously in containing any risk of spread after the holidays.

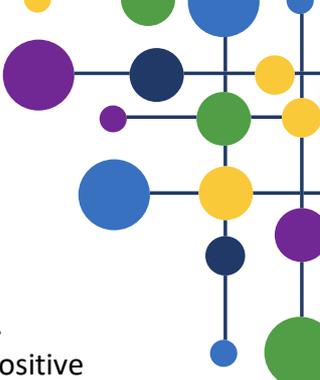
Headteachers will share and will have shared full details of the changes. They will also share their proposals for testing in January. At this stage, I do not expect this to require delays to the start of term for any year group.

Please get in touch with individual schools if you have any questions or need help. Let us hope these are the only restrictions we will need.

Examinations should still take place this summer. This applies to public examinations in secondary schools and the end of key stage 2 tests in primary schools. By way of precaution, secondary schools have been asked to ensure our students have completed three assessments throughout the year. These assessments could be used to award grades in the examinations, so good preparation is even more important this year.

We have been celebrating some good news in the trust recently. Millbridge, A SHARE MAT Primary Academy was inspected in early October and inspectors were impressed. Millbridge is the first of our schools to be inspected since the new OFSTED inspection systems were introduced. When the school first joined our trust, it was judged 'inadequate' and is now 'good'. Some of the report highlights are:

- “Parents recognise the hard work that has been put in place to improve Millbridge and make it a happier place for pupils. Parents can see teachers have high expectations of what their children can achieve. They say teachers support their children well.

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- “An exciting curriculum is in place. Pupils are interested and behave well in lessons.
 - “The multi-academy trust and local governors are committed to continue making positive changes at Millbridge. This effective team takes the time to understand what needs to change and check that it happens. They have not shied away from looking outside of the school for ideas. The desire to have the best standards for pupils is at the forefront.”

Well done to Mrs McCaffrey and her team at Millbridge. They have done a superb job. I am also pleased inspectors recognised our commitment as a trust to helping pupils achieve the best standards. That is true for all of our schools and I hope this report reassures you of our desire to do the right thing for our children and young people.

By the time you read this, we will have more or less a couple of weeks to go before the end of term. We will be running events in schools but may have to alter them to keep everybody safe. I hope you enjoy the run-up to Christmas and have a wonderful break when it comes. In the meantime, please keep safe and well.

Your sincerely



John McNally
CEO Share Multi Academy Trust