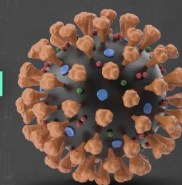


COVID19

Just as schools were getting back to running in a more usual way the Omicron variant has put us back a number of steps. December is usually the period when we have the most parental engagement, due to all the annual Christmas and end of term events, but unfortunately they have been derailed by new regulations again. I do hope that the events—whether smaller scale than normal, virtual or recorded—have been enjoyed. Our first consideration has to be the health and safety of everyone involved at the school so I am sure you appreciate and understand the actions taken.

In one of our schools we have had to take action, based upon Public Health advice, that we would not want to take and that is close the school and children revert to remote learning. We all know the best learning is going to be with a teacher in front of a class of children. The sheer volume of cases made this difficult to do. There will be schools up and down the country that are struggling to deal with Covid related staffing absence, children testing positive and school leaders having to make decisions about their schools and classes. I am sure there will continue to be cases of Covid identified in our schools and we hope to minimise any impact on your child's attendance and their learning.

**OMICRON
VARIANT**



PLAN B

Keep Newham Safe



COVID Pass is required

- All nightclubs
- Indoors with 500+ people (e.g. music venues / large receptions)
- Outdoors with 4,000+ people (e.g. outdoor festivals)
- Anywhere with 10,000+ people (e.g. sports stadiums)



Face covering is required

- Anywhere inside unless you are eating, singing or drinking
 - On public transport
- And is recommended:
- In outside spaces that are crowded



Staying home

- Work from home unless absolutely necessary to go into work
- Stay home if you have any symptoms of COVID
- Take a rapid test (LFT) every day if you have been in contact with someone with COVID



Carry on testing



Wear your face covering



Wash your hands



Keep your distance



Keep windows open

Newham COVID-19 Helpline can help with isolating:

020 7473 9711 (9am-7pm, every day) or email covidhelp@community-links.org

(19-20)

People of the Heart
of Everything We Do

The Government's Plan B came into force this week. Whilst this is more general about public behaviour and actions we all need to do, the message is still the same about school. Everyone must do their bit to help contain the spread of the virus. Getting vaccinated is a personal choice, and that should absolutely be the case. I would ask those who have not been vaccinated or received their booster to also consider the impact of their actions on others. I have had my booster this week and it gives me a greater sense of assurance in myself and helped reduce my anxiety. There will never be a 100% guarantee but it is my understanding that I am better protected having had the booster than if I had not.

As we come to the end of the school year, there is a lot of talk again as to whether schools will be closed again in the New Year. We know that the Government have said school closure will be last measure—schools will be the last to be closed and first to open. We all hope this is not a required action but the Headteachers have been making sure the schools are prepared for remote learning. Let us all hope it is not required.

SCHOOL BUDGETS

As we approach the end of the financial year, all the schools will be reviewing their spend this year in preparation to set the new budget for April. Once again there have been many challenges the schools have faced in dealing with Covid19 on top of the everything else. School budgets are expecting an injection of cash from the Government, but as often is the case, the new money is already spent before it arrives in the school. Although a fictional graph, the money coming in is not matching the money going out resulting in overspend in the school. This is common throughout the country. Dersingham is in the best financial position currently as they are just about balancing their budget. They have worked very hard, having to make difficult decisions over the years to get to that position. At Central Park, previous healthy reserves have been eroded over the years as they get dipped into each year. Whilst there is no risk of the school going into deficit it does have to take actions to ensure this remains the case. At Calverton, unfortunately the school is already in a deficit. Officially this is not allowed and has to have special approval. Therefore, the school will be looking at a variety of actions over the next couple of years to continue to reduce and eliminate the deficit position. A situation that is not going to be quick and easy to get out of but every action possible is being considered to achieve this.



TERM DATES

A reminder that the schools are due to re-open on Wednesday 5th January. The calendar for 2021/22 and for 2022/ 23 will be on the school's website so do look ahead for other holiday periods.

January 2022						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Wednesday 5th Jan 2022

To date, during the Autumn Term, the schools have done pretty well for their attendance. Understandably there is more absence than usual but generally the attendance rates are very comparable to the national statistics. It is important that if you have made any decisions about travelling over the Christmas holidays that you are taking into consideration all the travel requirements and are prepared for further travel requests. Back in September, Newham was one of the areas in England with the highest number of children stuck overseas. Hopefully the strict restrictions do not come in again but you would need to plan your return with good time for the start of term.



FEDERATION AND CALVERTON

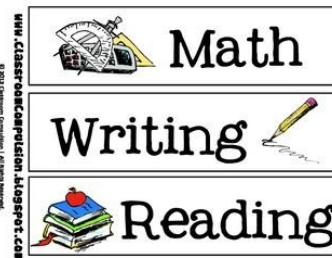
It has been great getting to know Calverton over the past term. The Federation Executive Team spent time together a few weeks back to look at the areas of strength in each school and where we can continue to support each other to get better. It was a really productive couple of days. As a Federation we do not focus on things for Ofsted but recognise they do make a judgement on the school and therefore important we meet the criteria they set out. Calverton is expected to be the first school out of the three to be visited by Ofsted, as early as the Summer Term, and so in the coming months the Executive Team will be at the school more, building on current practice so we are in the best possible position for when we get our Ofsted call.

RECOVERING EDUCATION

With a speculation about the position in the New Year, the schools are still trying their best to make sure that education that has been missed over the past 18 months is recovered in some shape or form.

The schools receive various grants to support our work and, whilst there are various national suggestions on how to use these grants, the schools are in the best position to decide how they are used.

There are many plans to help the children that need it most but all children will benefit from doing extra work—even if they are still achieving what is expected of them. I am sure, like the teachers, you would be very happy if your child achieved more than expected.



Dersingham are contracting staff over the Christmas holiday to work with certain children. All schools will be setting different homework projects and work that can be completed at home. Your support is greatly appreciated in this. At the very least, children can still learn to read, learn their timetables and be writing about anything. Fluency in all these areas gives children a fantastic head start to their learning in school.

In the coming months I shall be looking in more detail at how the schools are spending their grants to help children achieve better and more. Some of the money will be spent to benefit all children in the school and some will be targeted. We want to make sure that the grants are having impact and being spent in the most effective way.



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

The end of term is this Friday, 17th December. I hope you can spend time together as extended families and have a much better festive period than last year. Whether you celebrate Christmas or not, you cannot help but feel it is such a joyous time of the year. So a very Merry Christmas to all those celebrating and peaceful wishes to everyone else. Please take care, look after one and other and remain safe during the holidays.

We did say it last year, but the next year has to be better than this year. All the very best for 2022.

Darren Williams, Executive Headteacher

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

Sending wishes your way for a great holiday season and a super fabulous year ahead!

