



West Moors Middle School

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28th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

Covid update

We continue to have a number of pupils and staff testing positive for Covid. I am pleased that numbers of cases have declined substantially since the peak last week but it has by no means gone away.

Thank you for your support with children, staff and visitors continuing to wear face coverings in corridors and classroom settings when we were experiencing a spike in the number of Covid cases in school last week. Guidance from the Department for Education states that it is no longer necessary for pupils or adults to wear a face covering in corridors and other busy areas in school. However children may still wish to wear a face covering at these times if they would prefer to. Face coverings are also no longer required in classrooms. Unless there are specific concerns that a child has (for example someone in their household who is especially vulnerable), children will not need to wear face coverings in class which will support communications in the classroom.

Face coverings should still be worn on school transport and public transport.

If there is an increase in the infection rate in school this guidance may need to change in the future.

The school vaccination service will be returning soon to offer further Covid vaccinations. When we receive further information as to who will be offered a vaccination we will let you know. Fresh parental permission will be required for this and an online form will be sent out for this purpose. As ever, no child will be vaccinated without parental permission. Please be clear with your child what vaccinations he/ she has received and whether you wish him/ her to receive one in school. I would continue also to strongly encourage all parents and carers to book any further vaccinations that their child is due via the NHS booking service.

We have been advised that Boots in Christchurch have now been assured to provide Covid-19 vaccinations to 12-15 year olds. At the moment they are running walk-in clinics 7 days a week. This is for first and second doses for all 12-15 year olds. Children need to attend with a parent or legal guardian and bring their NHS number if they know it.

Attendance and lateness to school

One of the most important ways a parent can support the education of their child and the child's social, emotional and academic development is to ensure they attend school every day and on time and avoid any unauthorised absences.



Headteacher: Dr D Craddock PhD MA BSc (Hons) NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs D East BSc (Hons) PGCE SENDCo

Regular attendance has not been easy or possible for many during the pandemic, however, with the government prioritising education and all schools being open to all pupils, full-time attendance is now expected again from all children. [Read the current government guidance.](#)

Going to school regularly and being part of the school community gives our children a sense of belonging and means that they benefit not only from lessons and learning, but also can see friends and teachers, ask for help, join clubs, go on school trips, have a clear routine and can get mental health support.

I would like to share some key national facts relating to school attendance which helps to explain why it is so important:-

- A child who is absent a day of school per week misses an equivalent of two years of their school life
- Each day of school missed by a child will reduce their attendance by 0.5%, and at secondary school will mean they miss five lessons.
- Ten whole days of school has been missed if a pupil has 95% attendance – that's 50 lessons.
- Twenty whole days of school has been missed if a pupil's attendance is 90%.
- If a pupil is persistently absent (90% attendance) they have missed 4 weeks of schooling.
- Being 15 minutes late each day is the same as missing two weeks of school over the year.
- Catching up on missed lessons impacts on the pupil, the teacher and other children in that class.

As part of our return to 'normality' may I remind parents and carers of the following:

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school you need to report this for each day that he/ she is absent via telephone, leaving an answerphone message or email to office@westmoorsmid.dorset.sch.uk. We would value your support with this as if we do not hear from you we will phone you to check that he/ she is safe and find out why he/ she is not in school which takes up a significant amount of staff time.

School starts at 8.25 a.m. (Years 5 and 7) and 8.30 a.m. (Years 6 and 8), in the morning. This is the time that children need to be in their tutor room ready for registration. I am concerned that a number of children are arriving late for school. I realise that traffic is heavy at this time in the morning so families may need to reconsider the time they set off for school to avoid being late.

We remain concerned also that some parents/ carers continue also to stop on the zigzag lines outside school or block neighbours' entrances, leading to complaints which I then have to deal with. Please may I ask parents' and carers' support to ensure that we keep these areas clear when parking vehicles. I would also ask drivers to not exceed 20 mph outside school on this residential road, driving with caution at drop off and collection times.

On Monday the 31st January 2022, it is a school Inset day. We therefore look forward to welcoming our children back next week, on Tuesday 1st February 2022.

Finally, we would just like to say thank you to the many parents and carers who have shared kind words of appreciation for everyone's hard work and efforts to ensure that our school remained open to all year groups, despite the recent spike in the number of Covid cases experienced. We are grateful for your incredible support and want you to know that your kind words mean a lot to us.

With all good wishes,



Dr Deborah Craddock

