



12th May 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We have reached the mid-point of this half term, and there is a real sense of optimism as the Government relax the national restrictions in line with their roadmap. Whilst we enjoy our new freedoms, it is essential that we do not become complacent and remember to keep to the guidance to do all we can to try and avoid a resurgence of the virus.

I would like to once again express my sincere thanks to you for supporting your child and everything school is doing to ensure we do all we can to keep everyone safe. Please keep helping your child use the Lateral Flow Devices to test at home every Monday and Thursday morning. Remember that if you receive a positive result from a LFD, or your child displays any of the three main symptoms of coronavirus (a new continuous cough, high temperature, or a loss of taste and/or smell), they must not attend school and seek a PCR test immediately through the NHS. In such cases, you must inform the school so we can trace close contacts and instruct individuals to self-isolate if required.

You may be aware that from May 17th the Government has changed its guidance on the wearing of face coverings in schools. I can confirm that we will be following the advice from Public Health England as we have done throughout the pandemic. **Therefore, children are no longer required to wear face coverings at school from Monday May 17th.** However, we understand that there may be some pupils who wish to continue to wear their face covering and we are happy to support this. The guidance for adults in school is slightly different to pupils, and staff will still be wearing face coverings in corridors and communal spaces and some staff will continue to wear a face covering in classrooms. It remains vitally important that all individuals continue to wash their hands regularly, catch coughs and sneezes, whilst minimising interactions and maintaining a distance wherever possible.

As well as maintaining our system of controls to ensure everyone is safe in school, we have also been prioritising the need to provide the very best environment for the pupils to ensure they fulfil their potential. There has been a key focus on children meeting our expectations in terms of uniform and behaviour so that everyone can achieve success. Our highly experienced teachers are continually developing approaches to ensure all children are making progress despite ongoing restrictions in the classroom. We also have more children now accessing our specialist facilities in Science, Art, DT and Performing Arts which has had a significant impact on skill development in these subjects.

Through this term we also continue to work hard and deliver activities and events that will provide additional experiences and further enhance provision. For example, later in the term we hope to be able to run a Sports Day, Rewards Presentation Event, GCSE subject fieldwork visits for Year 10, and Bikeability for Year 7. We also hope to welcome our new Year 7 pupils for transition visits to prepare them for September. Once again we have proved an extremely popular choice with prospective parents and will be oversubscribed for a third year in a row. All events will be undertaken in line with the latest guidance and we hope to be able to add more activities as the term progresses.

Headteacher:
Mr R Lycett

Wolverhampton Road, Stafford, ST17 9DJ

Tel: (01785) 258383

Email: office@smhs.staffs.sch.uk

We have been working closely with our catering providers Chartwells to ensure there are a range of meal options that meet nutritional requirements. The latest menus can now be found on our website by following this [link](#). Unfortunately, we are still only able to provide a lunch service due to Government guidance. Please remember that any parents claiming some benefits can claim Free School Meals for any of their children who are registered at a Staffordshire school and who would normally be at school at lunch time. Even if you don't want your children to have the meals, claiming them will help our school. The more eligible parents who claim meals, the more funding the school receives. If you are currently not registered for Free School Meals, and feel you may be entitled to apply then all the information can be found at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals.

Mental Health Awareness Week is taking place from 10th to 16th May. Given the challenges of the last twelve months, Mental Health Awareness Week provides a great opportunity for everyone to discuss the issue of mental health and wellbeing. The theme for this year's week is 'nature' and recent National Trust research found a link between feeling connected to nature and having improved wellbeing. If you would like to find out some more information to talk to your child at home the following websites might help:

[Mental Health Foundation](#) have produced **free** resources including helpful guides and top tips for pupils and parents/carers to connect with nature.

[Mental Health UK](#) invite everyone to immerse themselves in the '5 Ways to Wellbeing', while reconnecting with nature across the week. Across the week, there are some small but effective activities to 'Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning, and Give' that can help everyone to feel more positive and be able to get the most out of life.

The new Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has launched [The Big Ask](#) – the largest ever consultation with children aged 4 to 17 in England. It aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future, so that children are at the heart of our country's recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Parents, carers and those working with children are also invited [to complete the adult survey](#) to share their views about the future for children and young people today, and what they think is holding young people back. Please feel free to contribute your views through the links. The results from this survey will help the Children's Commissioner identify the barriers preventing children from reaching their potential, put forward solutions and set ambitious goals for the country to achieve.

As mentioned previously, perhaps we can all feel more positive about the future as the transmission rates remain relatively low and the Government relaxes national restrictions. Our focus at Stafford Manor High School remains on ensuring that we provide the very best education for your child whilst keeping everyone as safe as possible. As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need any support.

Yours sincerely



Mr R Lycett
Headteacher

Headteacher:
Mr R Lycett

Wolverhampton Road, Stafford, ST17 9DJ
Tel: (01785) 258383
Email: office@smhs.staffs.sch.uk