



# Westfield Arts College



29<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

After a rise in COVID cases before October half term, it has been much more settled in school and we have not been significantly affected in recent weeks. We will continue to send a letter to you if a person in your child's class has tested positive.

Following the announcement on Saturday regarding the new COVID variant, the DfE have issued amended guidance to schools as follows:

## **Information for all education and childcare settings on new measures in response to the identification of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the UK**

On Saturday 27 November, the Prime Minister [announced](#) new temporary measures following the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the UK.

The new measures will be introduced as a precaution to slow down the spread of the variant while we gather more information. We will continue to keep this under review as the situation develops.

### **Face coverings**

Face coverings should be worn in communal areas in all settings by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt.

Pupils or students (in year 7 or above) should continue to wear face coverings on public and dedicated school transport, unless they are exempt.

### **Testing**

All educational and childcare settings should continue to encourage staff and students to test twice weekly using lateral flow device (LFD) tests.

### **Contact tracing and isolation**

The [current guidance on contact tracing and isolation](#) remains in place. In addition to these, any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age. You will be contacted directly and told to isolate.

### **Vaccination**

All eligible staff and students aged 12 and over are encouraged to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters.

Vaccines are our best defence against COVID-19. They help protect young people and adults, and benefit those around them. Vaccination makes people less likely to catch the virus and less likely to pass it on.

To book a vaccination, please visit: [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).



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SCHOOL

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## Changes to the red list for international travel to England

Individuals arriving in England from red list countries must follow the [red list](#) rules.

South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and Zimbabwe moved onto the red list at 12pm Friday 26 November.

Angola, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia were added to the red list 4am Sunday 28 November.

Schools, out of school settings and colleges will want to consider whether to go ahead with planned international educational visits at this time, recognising the risk of disruption to education resulting from the need to isolate and test on arrival back into the UK.

At Westfield we have continued to keep COVID safety measures in place, including the wearing of face coverings. If your child is Secondary age (Y7 and above) could you please remind them about wearing their face covering on school transport and in communal areas? Younger children can also wear them if they wish. They are not required to wear them in class. We also understand that some are exempt and find this difficult.

COVID vaccinations will be taking place in school this week on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December for pupils who are 12 and over. A final reminder to you is to continue testing your child (Secondary aged) twice a week using the LFD tests that we send home for you. We will be asking you to do this over the Christmas holiday and we will again be testing pupils on their return to school in January.

With best wishes

Seán Kretz  
Head Teacher



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