

CWALDA/GHA

12 October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: COVID-19 12 -15 Age Vaccinations and Lateral Flow Device Testing Programmes

I hope this correspondence finds both you and your respective families well today.

I am writing to you regarding these two important matters the first one of which is the Government's 12-15 age group COVID-19 Vaccinations Programme. As you know, unlike the vast majority of schools nationwide based on national data from yesterday, Plume Academy has now hosted and supported the School Age Immunisation Service (SAIS) on three separate days which as a direct result has seen nearly 600 students in this age bracket receive a COVID-19 vaccination as requested by their respective parents and carers. This was after providing nine, ten and fifteen days' notice between the respective vaccination days in addition to providing further correspondences during that time period clarifying matters relating to Gillick competency and the extra vaccination day we managed to secure on 6 October 2021.

The academy, despite the clear accompanying letter from the NHS in my 21 September 2021 stating not to contact the academy but to contact the SAIS Team with any questions about the COVID-19 12-15 age group vaccination, also fielded dozens of calls from our parents and carers during this time period. Most of these were in relation to trying to book in a vaccination slot on the third day all of which we managed to do and supported the SAIS Team get right down to their very last vial.

However, we are still receiving calls from parents and carers asking about their child receiving the vaccination with a few saying their GP has asked them to contact the academy. With this point in mind, and as the accompanying letter from the NHS contained within my original letter on 21 September 2021 clearly stated, like all vaccination programmes, this remains a matter between the individual family and the SAIS Team, not the academy; we only host and provide administrative support for such events. Therefore, may I politely reiterate that should any of our parents and carers with children in this age bracket have any future questions about the 12-15 age group COVID-19 vaccination programme, to contact the SAIS Team on: 0300 790 0597. Please note, however, that due to the Government giving them an incredibly challenging deadline to get this vaccination programme completed, response times may be slower than desired.

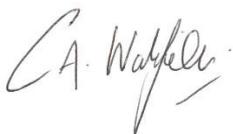
The second important matter I wish to raise with you in this correspondence relates to the ongoing LFD Testing Programme. Since March 2021, well over half of our families continue to partake in this twice weekly. As a direct result, these continue to pick up both symptomatic and asymptomatic cases. For the record, whilst since Monday 19 July 2021 we are no longer required to partake in directly informing you of any COVID-19 cases or conduct any form of contact tracing, at this exact moment in time, cases linked to the families and staff of the academy remain incredibly low with just seven students from five families out of 1726 students who currently attend Plume Academy currently self-isolating. There are currently no staff out of a team of over 300 currently self-isolating either.

Now whilst this very much bucks the current national picture, as we have done for the vast majority of the pandemic period other than the last week or so of both the last Autumn and Summer terms, I can assure you we won't rest on our laurels and will only continue to drive in-house COVID-19 protocols via assemblies, emails and in-person conversations. We must also continue to maintain the twice weekly testing programme, however, and with this in mind, please note the following reminders:

1. Please continue to test twice weekly with one of them being on the afternoon of the Sunday before the working week starts.
2. Please report any positive LFD cases to your child's Assistant Head of Year or via our absence line; both will be picked up without delay and reported through to me.
3. If your child or any other household member produce a positive LFD test, a PCR test must be booked via the NHS and s/he must self-isolate until the result of the PCR comes through.
4. No other household member needs to self-isolate unless contacted and told to do so via the NHS Track and Trace Team, unless any other household member also returns a positive LFD test or if they develop any of the three main symptoms of a high temperature, a new persistent cough or a loss or change in their smell or taste.
5. If you or your child develop any of these three main symptoms, please book a PCR test via the NHS and self-isolate until the outcome is known.

Thank you for taking the time to read this further COVID-19 related correspondence as well as for your ongoing vitally important support which is only continuing to keep our students, staff and families as safe as possible as we continue to work our way through this ongoing challenging period of our lives.

Yours sincerely



Mr C A Wakefield
Executive Principal

