



6 November 2020

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Dear Parents / Carers

In view of the national lockdown until 2 December I thought it pertinent to write and update you with our plans. First, we agree that keeping schools open should be a priority, our children only get one chance at education. Ridgeway Academy remains fully open to all children and we will continue to follow government guidance and work to ensure continuity of learning for all.

Should one of our pupils need to isolate, we have a Remote Learning strategy which indicates the normal timetable of lessons which are available through Google Classroom and signposts the many valuable educational sites that may be accessed. I would like to reassure you we have not yet had a positive case within school.

COVID-related staff absence is currently manageable should this reach a critical point, we have a comprehensive contingency plan and you will be kept fully informed.

Here are the updates following guidance released by the Department for Education (DfE) on Wednesday evening:

### **Face coverings**

Face coverings will now be mandatory for all staff and students in communal areas and when travelling between lessons in our buildings. Please can you ensure your child has two face coverings with them at all times, in case one breaks. If you believe your child is exempt from wearing a face covering please contact their Director of Learning who will provide them with a lanyard to ensure they are not continuously challenged by our staff.

### **Physical Education**

In line with Government guidelines we will continue with outdoor PE where possible this half term. Please ensure your child wears appropriate Ridgeway Academy PE kit for the cold weather with base layers as appropriate.

### **Ventilation**

The latest Government advice continues to encourage well ventilated teaching areas even as we approach the winter months. Therefore, classroom windows and doors will be kept open. Students will need to wrap up warm. We will expect students to adhere to the school uniform policy, including a Ridgeway Academy jumper under the blazer where needed and base layers. Hoodies are not permitted.

### **Equipment**

Please ensure your child is fully equipped with all the basic stationery as teachers are unable to loan any equipment in these current times. All children were provided with a planner at the start of term, including a mini whiteboard and pen. Replacement pens can be purchased for £2 via their Form Tutor or Director of Learning.

## **Curricular and extra-curricular activities**

PE, sport, music, dance and drama lessons can continue in line with the current guidance – during school time.

Our Sixth form consortium lessons will continue to deliver the majority of education on site unless we or our Consortium Schools receive written public health advice to move some groups to remote teaching.

The DfE has confirmed that the following activities are still able to go ahead during this period of national lockdown:

Any activities which take place during school hours – so any lunch or break-time club is permitted, as long as it follows the government's broader schools' guidance.

Any activities which are focused on education or training, including 1:1 or group tuition, catch-up clubs, revision clubs, etc.

Breakfast clubs whose primary purpose is providing food for vulnerable children.

We are seeking clarification on the position regarding after school clubs.

## **Reporting a positive case**

We will continue with the system set up for the half term holiday. If your child develops symptoms and you book a test, please follow this link <https://ridgeway.herts.sch.uk/covid-19-form/> to provide details. Our team will then be in contact with you to provide a track and trace questionnaire so that we can act with speed to identify close contacts if the test result is positive.

A reminder that even if the test result is negative, if the student has been identified by track and trace as a close contact of someone who has tested positive, they must complete the full 14 days isolation.

Our staff and your support are equally important, our staff are working tirelessly in the most extraordinarily challenging circumstances and you are making a huge contribution, with your support and encouragement. I am so grateful and proud of the Ridgeway community.

We know families will be feeling anxious and we want to reassure you that we will be supporting all our community during these uncertain times. For the safety of all please can I remind you that visitors will not be given access to the school site without a pre-booked appointment

Thank you for your on-going support.

Your sincerely



Sarah Mitcherson  
**Headteacher**