



The Albion Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Tuesday 8th December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Covid19 Curriculum issues

I write to update you on the impact of the Corona virus on the school and our plans to address these in the very short term over the remainder of this penultimate week.

I wish to set out from the start that the goal for all at the academy is simple: to educate our community to the best of our ability in a safe and productive environment. We know that how schools are managing this and indeed the impact is an emotive topic with some calling for schools to be closed. I do not support this idea but do call for greater flexibility and support to allow us to meet the ever-increasing challenges around Covid. The information in the media is not always helpful.

As of 8th December, the school has 23 staff absent due to general absences, illness and of course, isolation due to Covid. Within this group were 14 pupil facing staff. To have 25% of our teaching capacity missing makes the task of delivering lessons incredibly difficult. We have attempted to use external supply teachers where appropriate and where the risk to educational stability supports it. For example, we would always seek to use a subject specialist for an absence over 24 hours.

This will be a similar position in many other schools as we all fight to get both the quality supply teachers alongside the subject specialists. This is therefore a critical point for us to maintain stability but also remain open to as many students as we can whilst also limiting external staff coming on site and increasing the risk of corona virus transmission. Where this is not achievable, as has been highlighted today, we must act. **For this reason, I have taken the decision to limit attendance at school to four out of five year groups per day until the end of this week initially.** This will allow us the vital time to ascertain if our absent colleagues can return or not, thus hopefully avoiding yet further disruption in the final week of this term.

This will be yet another frustration to the parents and students of The Albion Academy who have faced a turbulent period since March 2020. This decision is not taken lightly but is a necessary and immediate adjustment due to the significant extent of absences, many of which occurred immediately after the weekend just gone as well as dealing with absences related to 'Long Covid'. Instead, we are taking this pragmatic decision to keep as many in school as possible until greater clarity is apparent.

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Therefore, we have identified year groups will be asked **TO NOT ATTEND SCHOOL below in Appendix 1**. The days chosen represent the best curriculum coverage or opportunity to continue learning for year group based on the timetable, the number of staff available to be able to deliver lessons.

Work will be provided on MS Teams, Hegarty, Bedrock and Seneca via the usual method with which we assign work but will not include live lessons due, of course, to the staff absences. This is far from ideal but is a short-term response to the immediate issue caused by staff who are awaiting covid tests, ill with covid, suffering from 'long covid', other staff who have recently been diagnosed with serious illnesses and those staff who are isolating due to being contacted by Track and Trace.

The patience and support offered by parents has been hugely welcomed by staff and a continued motivator during our difficulties. I am sure that the frustrations of parents and students are great and these are shared by myself and my committed team. Like last time when I notified you all of the rota I would ask please that you continue to support the school, accepting that this is neither of our design nor wish and that we must remain a cohesive community if we are to see this through.

Whatever the future holds during this pandemic, we must look out for each other and most importantly, the future of the young people we serve.

Thank you for your support and patience.

Mr J Roberts
Headteacher – The Albion Academy

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Appendix 1:

Learning From Home Days – Week – Date – Year Group

Week B

09.12.20 Year 8

10.12.20 Year 9

11.12.20 Year 7

At this point we will review our staffing and it is hoped that the issues caused by covid, testing and close contact isolation will have stabilised to an extent to allow a return to a more normal timetable from Monday 14th December.

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