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# Blackminster Middle School

## School Bulletin

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July 16<sup>th</sup>

Dear parents and carers,

As we approach the final few days of term, I have a few important updates for you.

### **COVID-19 class closures**

Here at Blackminster we have been extremely fortunate to have avoided any COVID related class closures since September. However, with increasing cases in the community it was inevitable that we would have cases in school, and sure enough the last couple of weeks have seen some disruption for suspected and confirmed cases.

I'd like to thank parents and carers for your immense patience and understanding as we've negotiated this situation. As ever, we are working closely with the Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT) and Public Health England and following their directions. I should also make it clear that, while the national rules are changing on Monday, I am obliged to follow the rules that are in place at the current time.

We fully appreciate how difficult this is for parents and carers, and we are terribly disappointed that some students will have their last few days at Blackminster disrupted by the pandemic, but this is a situation that is completely beyond our control.

### **September return to school**

We're looking forward to welcoming students back in September. At present, we are expecting that things will be more "normal" when we return to school. This means

- No more "bubbles" – children will be able to mix again
- No masks, even on school and public transport
- Back to school uniform rather than PE kit

We will keep up our increased hygiene measures and enhanced cleaning.

The government recently announced that they expect schools to undertake two Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) for children in Years 7 and 8 before returning to school. We have some provisional plans, but from experience we have found that guidance can and frequently does change at very short notice! I will therefore write to you again before the end of the holiday to confirm arrangements for COVID testing before the start of term and exact start dates for each year group. Please watch out for that email.

### **Uniform reminders**

Please can I remind parents and carers about our expectations for school uniform in September? In particular

- Hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back.
- We accept trainers or school shoes, but all footwear must be plain black.
- Skirts, if worn, should be no shorter than 5cm above the knee and made of tailored fabric – not stretchy material.

**Verbal abuse of staff**

The vast majority of our parents and carers are incredibly kind and supportive, but in the last week we have had some people who have behaved in an unacceptable way towards school staff. It's a very tiny minority, and we do understand that parents and carers are often under stress and feelings run high when our children are involved. However, I wish to make it very clear that verbal abuse of school staff is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

**THANK YOU**

Finally, I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of our wonderful parents and carers for all of your support for your children, and for us as a school during the last year. We're particularly grateful for your support for students during periods when they have been unable to attend school. We know that many of you have been juggling your own work, as well as school work, other siblings and family life and we know that it's been incredibly difficult. My staff and I are all very much hoping that academic year 2021-22 will be much more settled, and that we can have our lovely students back in school where they belong - learning, having fun and growing together.

I wish you all a happy, restful summer. I hope the sun shines and we see you safe and well in September.

With all good wishes

Linda McQuone



Executive Headteacher