



15 January 2021

## **RE: Weekly update**

Dear parent carers

I hope that this update finds you well. It has been another fantastic week as more pupils have returned, and seem very happy to be back. 60% of pupils have returned to our Futures centre, at Shrewsbury College, full of smiles and focused on settling back into their routines. As soon as we are able to, I encourage you to visit their public café on site. It's an inspirational place, run by our amazing students and staff who always give a warm welcome and keen to talk to anyone about what they are doing and working towards. A few have positively transitioned to supported living and others are looking forward to starting their work experience and supported internships, that lead on to paid/ voluntary work.

### **The situation this week**

#### **Staffing and class groups:**

- We have continued to stay open to all class groups on all 3 sites, and overall we have 50.6% of pupils attending school. However this is not evenly distributed with some class groups with higher attendance than others. We thank staff, parent carers and pupils for how well we have been able to adapt to a re-distribution of staff/ bespoke rotas to enable us to manage group sizes.
- To maintain our clean environments and enable pupils and staff to sanitise/ wash hands even more regularly during the period of national lockdown, we are managing pupil numbers in all classes. We have worked with the parent carers of 21 class groups to agree bespoke pupil rotas, with priority of full time provision given to pupils with additional vulnerabilities.
- We have managed the absence of 84 (30%) staff this week – 56 absences were in relation to Covid-19; Of the 56, 13 of those were either awaiting test results, isolating due to a Track and Trace notification, and 20 staff are Shielding throughout the duration of national lockdown.

#### **Class bubble closures:**

- 2 class bubbles continue to isolate from last week following 2 positive Covid test results – these were isolated cases, unrelated to each other.
- A second pupil has tested positive within an already isolated class bubble from last week.
- 4 class bubbles closed and re-opened following negative test results (2 will return on Monday).

#### **Lateral Flow Tests:**

- 1 member of staff tested positive following a Lateral Flow Test at Futures, which has been confirmed positive following a regular PCR Covid-19 Test. No class bubbles have been affected and all other results for Lateral Flow Tests at Futures for students and staff are negative.
- 65 Secondary aged pupils were tested – all results are negative. Well done to all pupils who gave this a go. They were all fantastic, with some pupils with SLD/CLDD (Severe/ Complex Learning Difficulties) in particular who surprised everyone at how good they were!
- 179 staff tests were carried out, all but 1 results are negative.

### **Shared planning**

Teachers have been working to share with you weekly plans to support off-site learning, share strategies and identify online resources which link to the curriculum that is being taught on-site. Thank you for your support and flexibility as we approach this lockdown period with a more blended method of teaching and learning for pupils who are on-site, off-site, and particularly for those pupils doing both.



This follows parent carer feedback given to us last term, so please let us know how we are doing, what's working/ not working, and if you require anything else.

### **Pupil attendance**

We have agreed 33.5% parental requests for either full/ part-time leave of absence (LOA) so far. These absences from school will be authorised. We will be reviewing these with you each week as part of our wellbeing checks, where you will be able to tell us how things are going and if you would like to change the arrangements for your child/ young person. There is no need for you to re-submit a LOA request as we can record the outcome of these discussions for our records. If circumstances change we will keep you updated.

All absences related to the agreed use of bespoke rotas will automatically be authorised and we continue to be grateful for your support with this. This situation is also reviewed on a weekly basis so please let us know if your circumstances change and we will do our best to identify a different approach.

If you have not had confirmation of a LOA (Leave of Absence) that you have requested, please can I ask that you follow this up with [louise.tilley@severndaleacademy.co.uk](mailto:louise.tilley@severndaleacademy.co.uk) or call her on: 01743 563283. Louise will record your request for consideration and we will then be able to give you a written response and update our records.

We appreciate your working with us to ensure that you have confirmation of your child/ young persons agreed LOA request to avoid unauthorised absences.

### **Free School Meal Vouchers**

Please be aware that for those children/young people who receive Free School Meals, and have their leave of absence authorised, vouchers will be sent to you on a week-to-week basis and will cover LOA, any periods of Covid related class closure, or bespoke rota. We understand how challenging the situation is for many of us, so we will try to get vouchers to eligible families at the beginning of each week.

Please note that any children/ young people with a LOA declined or not agreed, will be expected to attend school. In these circumstances, any eligibility to Free School Meals will only be provided through the school kitchen. Please email: [rhiannon.moreton@severndaleacademy.co.uk](mailto:rhiannon.moreton@severndaleacademy.co.uk) or call the school office if you have any questions about this.

Next week we will continue our new Lateral Flow Testing routines, of which we have asked for volunteers to support with this activity through our governing body and FOS. If you are interested in helping, and happy to complete online training and a test at the end, (that would be brilliant!) please let me know.

If you have any queries, feedback or suggestions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Have a good weekend!

Best wishes,

Sabrina Hobbs, Principal