



# Montgomery Academy

An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

Exec. Headteacher: Mr S.Cox BSc Hons MA (Ed) NPQH

Headteacher: Mr S. Careless BSc MSc NPQH

Senior Deputy Headteacher: Mrs C. Montgomery BSc MSc NPQSL

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Inspiring Excellence Together

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am disappointed to have to inform you that positive cases at Montgomery have risen further over the weekend. We currently have 45 cases spread over the five year groups. As stated in my previous communication, I am liaising with the Public Health team daily to discuss the current situation and potential further restrictions.

Restrictions currently in place are

- Any student that has any of the three main Covid symptoms of a loss/change of smell/taste, a recurring cough or a temperature should not come to school and book a PCR test. We have had students arrive to school with Covid symptoms. **This has been the case throughout the pandemic**
- On top of this, as was the policy last year in Blackpool, we would not expect any student with possible minor symptoms of Covid such as diarrhoea, stomach upset or any flu-like illness to be in school and they should also book a PCR test to rule out Covid. If a student's PCR test is negative then they can return to school
- Note: We have had a few reports that when parents have called 119, they have been told that they cannot book a PCR as their child does not have any of the main symptoms. Please state that the school has directed this advice from the local Public Health team. I am told that this is an option on the online booking system for a PCR. The link is <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- We have also asked that siblings of positive cases stay at home unless they are prepared to complete a lateral flow test
- We have kept all cleaning regimes that were in place last year and also the staggered starts/finishes/breaks and lunches, so that students are only mixing at lesson changeover on their way to their next lesson

I asked all parents to ensure that they supervised their child completing a Lateral Flow Test over the weekend and completed the 30 second form to confirm a negative result. Thank you to the parents who ensured the tests were completed and registered the result. However, only parents/carers of 123 students completed the form. I acknowledge that some students who have been unfortunate enough to have Covid should not do a LFT until 90 days after they have recovered. However, this is only around 10% of our student roll. It may be that parents just did not complete the form, as I am sure many more than this completed a test over the weekend. Yet, several students in school on Monday indicated that they had not done a test for a while.

The last set of LFTs were distributed to students on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November and the next set of tests will go out this Friday, though some are available for students to collect in the dining halls in the meantime if needed.

Following conversations with Public Health, I feel that we have no choice but to **reintroduce face masks in communal areas from Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November**

- This means that students and staff will be required to wear a face mask in corridors and the dining rooms unless they have a medical exemption
- They can remove their masks in the Dining Rooms to eat or drink once they have sat down
- When entering the classroom students will remove their masks, if they so choose to, when they are seated at their desk
- They are not required to wear a face mask outdoors, though they will be asked to line up at the start of the day with their mask on before entering the buildings for registration



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- I realise that this could be completely new for Year 7 students as primary students were not generally required to wear them in Year 6

It is with a heavy heart that we take this step, but we have to safeguard the health and wellbeing of both our students and staff, and the outbreak does not get worse to a point where we have to consider year groups on remote learning.

This restriction will stay in place until:

- case numbers reduce to a lower rate
- there is evidence of regular twice-weekly testing at home

We will review where we are on Friday 4th December

Students will be able to wear their own **plain black fabric face masks** worn earlier in the year or they will be given a disposable one in the morning.

If these extra restrictions do not bring case numbers under control, we will have to consider the following as next steps

- returning to the wearing of face masks in classrooms
- moving some year groups to remote learning

Though, by working together on the wearing of face masks and regular testing we will improve the situation from where we are now.

**If your son or daughter does have an existing plain black face mask, such as the ones given to the current Years 8-11 last year please ask them to bring it tomorrow (Wednesday).**

Kindest regards,

Mr. Careless