

# RIPLEY ST THOMAS

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

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10 September 21

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a joy this week to welcome pupils into the chapel for worship and to be able to (re)tell our Ripley story. We have reflected on the wonderful gift of our school to the people of Lancaster and how we can take inspiration from our founders, Julia and Thomas Ripley, in terms of their resilience, hard work, philanthropy and their faith in God through the difficult times.

I have been very impressed how well pupils have settled back into our routines and it has felt very calm and productive around the school site. It's great to be back!

## COVID-19 update

The testing of pupils before school went well and we managed to pick up a few positive cases who were asked to isolate. Since then, we have been informed of a number of other cases across all year groups. The numbers are small in relation to our school population, but we continue to monitor the situation carefully.

DFE guidance states that we no longer need to inform close contacts and ask them to isolate, however we do need to keep a log of cases and try to ascertain whether there appears to be a link between them. As yet, we have been unable to identify patterns of transmission within classes. We have spoken to Public Health Lancashire today who have informed us of a rise in cases across the area and in other local schools, which suggests that transmission is happening in the community. They have advised we continue with our current risk assessment measures:

- Pupils and staff to test twice a week. Replacement test kits can be collected from school.
- Ventilation in all classrooms
- Regular cleaning, especially frequently touched areas
- Regular hand sanitising – sanitiser is available all around the site
- Wipes, tissues and sanitiser in all classrooms
- Face coverings may be worn in classrooms and communal areas if staff or pupils wish.

If the situation changes and we start to see patterns across certain classes, Public Health will advise that we introduce contingency measures such as the re-introduction of face coverings or stopping singing / shouting / exercise in enclosed spaces for a short period. I will of course keep parents updated about any changes and developments.

Please do keep your child at home if they are experiencing symptoms and arrange a PCR test.

## Sickness Bugs

We also have a number of pupils suffering from sickness and diarrhoea at the moment. If your child is suffering they should not come into school until 48 hours have passed since their symptoms stopped.

## Parking

I have received some complaints from local residents this week regarding parents dropping off and picking up their children. There are reports of parents blocking driveways and access to the Medical Centre opposite Ripley and parking on both sides of the road so cars cannot pass.

*Believe.....*

Also, there are reports of parents parking in the cycle lane near Ripley on Ashton Road which is especially dangerous for our pupils who are cycling to school.

Please be mindful of our neighbours and where you decide to park when collecting. Over 1700 people leaving site at 3.05pm means the road is very busy and we suggest parents park further afield.

### **Uniform**

As you know, we pride ourselves on looking very smart at Ripley. We have been setting the tone with our pupils in main school and in Sixth Form this week and have been giving reminders where dress code or uniform doesn't quite meet our high standards.

We will shortly be having a 'crack down' on rolled up skirts or skirts which are extremely short. Mrs Benter and Mr Wilson will be sharing further information about this in due course. We do know that the uniform shop has now replenished their stocks of skirts if you need to purchase a new one.

### **Open Evening**

We will be hosting our Open Evening on Thursday evening at 6.00 – 8.30pm. This is for pupils in the current Year 6 only. Please do share this with friends and family who may have children in Year 6 and refer them to our website. Thank you to the many children who have put their names forward as a volunteer and a tour guide. It is wonderful that so many children want to represent our school!

I wish you all a restful weekend.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Walmsley', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mrs C Walmsley

Principal