



Dear Parents and Carers,

10th September 2021

I am writing to you at the end of our first week back and we have been so delighted with the way the term has started. Students are settling very well indeed into the routines and habits and we are seeing some excellent hard work. It is very powerful being able to see smiles and hear the lovely greetings that students and staff give each other. Thank you for making sure your child has everything needed for school and is on time - it makes for such a positive start to the day.

We have also carried out over 1200 lateral flow COVID tests in our in school test centre. Students were excellent when undergoing this process, and seem to be getting very accustomed to the process. We will be providing LFT for home use twice per week until at least the end of September. We have also been asked to do a PCR test trial where students are issued with a PCR test to complete at home. We will follow up with more details of this as we are notified.

Test and trace responsibilities are no longer held with the school but through the NHS. We have had 2 positive cases identified through our in school test centre this week and also several tests identified by students before they came back to school. If your child is identified as a close contact you will be contacted by test and trace. However in the spirit of openness I will notify you if we have positive cases ongoing in the school. A reminder that close contacts are advised to take a PCR test.

The 3 key symptoms of COVID remain a temperature, persistent cough and a loss of sense of taste or smell. If your child has any of these symptoms please keep them at home to isolate and get a PCR test. Please do not use a LFT if they have symptoms, a PCR must be used.

We have had some issues last week with both parent pay and our SIMS messaging, particularly for Year 7 parents. My apologies for this, we have worked to get both issues solved now. We are very keen to communicate well and effectively with you, and I will be writing to you weekly, with any other information coming to you as it is needed. I have included a 'Communication at Castle Manor' sheet with this letter to give key contacts to you and also to signpost to our website. If there is anything urgent you need to share please do this by telephoning the school so that we can respond quickly.

We are pleased too to be able to start after school clubs with sports clubs, homework clubs and library clubs starting next week with more to join. Please see the attached lists.

Unity Schools Partnership is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 07400386. The registered office is at Unity SP Offices, Park Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7YD.

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I also wanted to share that for this term I have been asked to provide some school improvement support to Felixstowe Academy who are in our Trust, Unity Schools Partnership. I am really proud to be asked to do this as it is testament to the journey of our school, which has grown from strength to strength in recent years. I will be based at Felixstowe on Wednesdays and Fridays, and in my absence Miss Cassels will be Acting Head of School. If there are any urgent issues that arise at Castle Manor or if Miss Cassels is absent I will remain at Castle Manor. We have also increased capacity in our leadership team, and have welcomed Mrs Reilly to our team as Assistant Headteacher, and Mrs Beaton our SENDCO is also a full time member of the leadership team as Assistant Head. My work with Felixstowe will only be for the Autumn Term and I will return full time to Castle Manor from January 2022.

I hope that your child has had a really positive start to the term. If there is anything at all that you need please get in touch with us using the contacts list I have shared with this letter.

With my best wishes.

Vanessa Whitcombe
Headteacher



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