



Dear Parents and Carers,

15th September 2020

I am certainly writing to you more often than I usually would do, but feel the need to keep you as updated as possible as to where we are in school.

I keep saying to anyone I talk to how very impressed I am with our students at how well they have adapted to significantly new routines. Our school is calm and orderly and learning is going very well.

We are continuing to reinforce expectations of students in and out of school, but are aware that there are groups of children who are gathering in the mornings to walk to school together. Please can you discourage this, especially meeting at the shops on the way to school and the 'rule of 6' introduced yesterday will be enforced in the community.

I wanted to also give you a list of email contacts in case you have not got them.

Attendance

Mrs Freds LFreds@castlemanor.org.uk

Mrs Dobell KDobell@castlemanor.org.uk

Achievement Leaders

Year 7 and 8 Mr Bonas KBonas@castlemanor.org.uk

Year 9 Mr Sims NSims@castlemanor.org.uk

Year 10 Miss Towers LTowers@castlemanor.org.uk

Year 11 Miss Cianciola GCianciola@castlemanor.org.uk

Please understand that during the day we are teaching and with students and therefore responses to emails will not be instant. If there is something urgent please telephone the school as this is the most efficient way of response. Our main reception is an area that can get busy. We ask you please to try to avoid coming in without an appointment - encourage students to make sure they bring everything to school such as PE kit and dinner money! If you need to meet a member of staff it is likely that they will not be available if you just turn up so please do call or email for an appointment. Parents and any other visitors to the school must wear a mask inside the buildings.

We have very few children at the moment wearing masks to move between lessons. Just a reminder that this is permitted. The majority of our movement is outside and the weather is in our favour at the moment. We are working hard to

Headteacher: Mrs. Vanessa Whitcombe

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.



Castle Manor Academy
Eastern Avenue
Haverhill
Suffolk CB9 9JE

Tel: 01440 705501
Fax: 01440 714050
Email: info@castlemanor.org.uk
Website: www.castlemanor.org.uk



avoid yeargroups mixing except in passing each other and we are not queuing in corridors so minimising contact. However we will keep this under daily review and if we feel we need to make masks mandatory we will.

Attendance is clearly a concern for you all, and we all ultimately want children in school as much as possible. However I understand caution and how we are adapting to the current situation. There currently seems to be a round of colds and tonsillitis in the school. Often this might bring symptoms that are similar to COVID so we must take care. However just to remind you that the symptoms of COVID are a high temperature - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature) a new, continuous cough - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual), a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste - this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

You are the ones who know your children well, and it is the coughing that comes along with a cold that seems to be worrying us at the moment. We want to be cautious, but do have a look at the symptom list at the 'continuous cough' if you need it for reference and support of your decision making.

Testing availability is low, and frustrating. I wrote to our MP Matthew Hancock yesterday to express my frustrations as it is impacting on the smooth running of our school. I will keep raising any issues with him that come up.

If the current economic situation has impacted your family you might find that you are eligible for free school meals and pupil premium. Free school meals at our school is delivered by credit going on to children's canteen accounts daily. The school also receives pupil premium funding that we can use to support with things such as uniform purchasing and subsidising school trips. Even if the family situation is only very temporary please do apply as the pupil premium element comes to the school for 6 years and the impact can be great. The link to apply is <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/school-meals-uniforms-and-trips/apply-for-free-school-meals/>

As ever, thank you for your support and please contact us if you have anything you need. My email is VWhitcombe@castlemanor.org.uk but please also use the emails above for specific issues of attendance and year group matters.

Vanessa Whitcombe
Headteacher

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