



Monday 11 October 2021

11th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over recent days some inaccurate information has been shared on social media about Medeshamstede Academy, we believe from individuals who have no direct association with the Academy. Understandably, some parents and carers have contacted the Academy and have shared the details of what they have seen about our school community in public and private social media groups. This information has been passed on to the relevant agencies to look in to.

In order to reassure you about some of the content of the misinformation:

- Our Principal Mrs Ives is currently away from the Academy for personal reasons. As we hope you can appreciate, it is important that her privacy is respected at this time. Until Mrs Ives returns, we shall be leading the school in her absence.
- Whilst separate to the above, it has been necessary over recent weeks to issue fixed-term exclusions to a small number of pupils. This is a rare and absolutely last resort which was only taken as a small minority continue to significantly disrupt the learning of other pupils. This behaviour will not be tolerated at Medeshamstede Academy. Unfortunately, the inaccurate information on social media has used this situation to claim that the Academy is under investigation. This is absolutely untrue.
- We also want to clarify that our Academy remains open, though some Secondary class provision has been moved to remote learning due to staffing shortages linked to continuing challenges with self-isolation.
- In regards to the number of supply staff currently working at the Academy, due to the interim staffing challenges we face at this current time because of COVID-19, we are using a number of supply staff where appropriate as an interim measure. It is also worth noting that, given many other local schools are also heavily relying on supply agency staff due to COVID-19-related challenges, agency staff are currently in high demand in our area.

We understand the importance for pupils who attend a special school like ours to have strong relationships with the staff in school, which is why we are in the process of recruiting additional permanent staff to ease some of the challenges we face, though the recruitment process takes time. Once this process is complete, we hope this will provide more of the consistency and familiarity that works best for our pupils.

Medeshamstede Academy is part of the Greenwood Academies Trust Group of Academies

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In addition, Jonathan Lewis (Director of Education at Peterborough Local Authority) has now issued guidance to all Peterborough schools, advising the implementation of additional measures for COVID-19. The Peterborough Local Authority and the public health team remain concerned about the spread of COVID-19 in our city.

As such, until 22nd October (subject to review), the guidance from Peterborough Local Authority is that:

- *Secondary schools are to reintroduce face coverings for staff and pupils in communal areas. Primary schools may consider the same arrangements.*
- *Staff should socially distance from each other within school buildings.*
- *All staff meetings are to revert to virtual, where possible.*
- *All visitors to schools are to wear face coverings.*
- *All non-essential events, including events where parents would normally visit in school, are to revert to virtual.*
- *Secondary schools are to promote and monitor uptake for twice-weekly Lateral Flow Testing and COVID-19 vaccinations for all staff and pupils. Primary school staff should also be doing this.*

During this period, we ask for the support of all parents and carers with the return of these COVID-19 measures. We also ask that you let us know if you do hear of any further inaccurate information about our Academy.

We trust that this letter provides reassurance about both our Academy and the wider challenges currently happening in Peterborough. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy office.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Spalding' followed by 'Jamie Jones'.

Nathaniel Spalding and Jamie Jones
Deputy Principals