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Headteacher: Mr M Wignall

23 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you once again for your support this half term, we are so fortunate to have such a wonderful body of parents/carers. The youngsters have been brilliant too, effortlessly polite, courteous, co-operative and hard working in the most challenging of circumstances. This week I have awarded every student 10 Achievement Points to mark their outstanding contribution to our community. Finally, a huge thank you to all of our staff who have adapted so well to the massive change in their working patterns including the constant movement and transport of resources around the school and across the bubbles.

As we move into the second half of the Autumn Term, the temperature outside will inevitably become colder and the weather conditions will no doubt worsen. As safety is our first and foremost priority we will be maintaining ventilation in classrooms and it will therefore become colder in these rooms. However, we will not be closing the school due to the temperature as the students have missed a great deal of learning already this year and it is vital that they not only catch up but are able to forge ahead.

Students will be allowed to wear their coats and other warm clothing in classrooms at the discretion of teaching staff. We will be keeping the heating on despite the windows and internal doors being open and we will vary the number of windows open in each classroom depending on the strength of the wind. Clearly, this is going to be a challenging situation for all involved and we will all need to be reasonable, resilient and brave over the winter period.

We are changing arrangements for the start of the day. Unfortunately, we have been experiencing a build-up of students at the foot of the drive in the mornings and at times have run out of space. Thus there is potential for a dangerous situation to develop. As a result we are asking all students to arrive at school between 8.35am and 8.45am and no later than 8.49am at the gate to the playground. When the students arrive onsite they will be directed straight away to their 'arrival zone' and will as a result continue to be separated from other year groups at all times. Students should not be on site before 8.35am.

We will still be operating a staggered end to the day, which results in a manageable flow of students along the school side of Dale Avenue. We are asking our students to stay on the Downlands side of the road until they round the corner to allow members of the community and parents/carers of Windmills children to walk towards their school 'against the flow'. Our students have as ever been understanding and co-operative to this request.

A reminder that students are expected to wear face coverings when travelling on trains and buses (unless exempt) and our transport partners have asked us to reinforce that scooters and skateboards are not allowed on buses. We are pleased to see students cycling to school, but please could you make sure they have a lock and cycle helmet.

Finally, please could I draw your attention again to my letter about the procedures we have in place if a student should test positive for Coronavirus - <https://www.downlands.w-sussex.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Covid-19-Safety-Measures-Letter-September-2020.pdf> and also our arrangements for blended learning in the case of students self-isolating <https://www.downlands.w-sussex.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Blended-Learning-Letter-October-2020.pdf>

Yours faithfully

Mr M Wignall  
Headteacher

