



**Mr G Panayiotou – Headteacher**  
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Our Ref: GP/NF

4<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers

Following our letter earlier in the week, the government have now issued additional guidance on the restrictions in place from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**The restrictions:**

- require people to stay at home, except for specific purposes
- prevent people gathering with those they do not live with, except for specific purposes
- close certain businesses and venues.

**Schools and colleges will remain open to all pupils.** The government has issued further guidance on shielding and protecting people who are extremely clinically vulnerable. The guidance states that:

*More evidence has emerged that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from COVID-19, even for children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow this advice. Speak to your GP or specialist clinician, if you have not already done so, to understand whether your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.*

*Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school while this advice is in place. Your school will make appropriate arrangements for you to be able to continue your education at home. **Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.***

**Definition of clinically extremely vulnerable groups:**

People who are defined as clinically extremely vulnerable are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19. There are 2 ways a child may be identified as clinically extremely vulnerable:

1. They have one or more of the conditions listed below, or
2. A hospital clinician or GP has added them to the **shielded patients list** because, based on their clinical judgement, they deem them to be at higher risk of serious illness if they catch the virus.

The following groups are identified as clinically extremely vulnerable:

- solid organ transplant recipients
- those with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy

- people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
- people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
- people having other targeted cancer treatments that can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
- people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- those with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma (i.e. a specific type of asthma which doesn't get better with the usual asthma medicines) and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- those with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell disease)
- those on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- those on dialysis or with chronic kidney disease (stage 5)
- other people who have also been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable, based on clinical judgement and an assessment of their needs. GPs and hospital clinicians have been provided with guidance to support these decisions.

### What should I do if I think my child is clinically extremely vulnerable?

If your child has one of the conditions listed above or have been identified by their GP as clinically extremely vulnerable, they should not attend school from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November until Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Please e-mail [admin@castlefordacademy.com](mailto:admin@castlefordacademy.com) with the full name of your child, their form and the reason why they need to shield. **Please note that children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.**

For those pupils who must stay at home, **on-line learning is available on the curriculum section of our website and on SMHW.** If your child is not able to access on-line learning, or does not have a suitable device, please contact the academy for support.

Other than those pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable, all other pupils should attend as normal.

### Exams

The Prime Minister and Education Secretary have been clear that exams will go ahead next summer, as they are the fairest and most accurate way to measure a pupil's attainment. Pupils now have more time to prepare for their exams next year, as most GCSEs will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic.

### Face Coverings

These will still be mandatory on corridors and social areas but the advice remains that they should not be worn in classrooms.

### Transport

Pupils are still allowed to use public transport to travel to and from the academy and should continue to wear a face covering as necessary. Pupils should not walk to school in large groups but they can walk with siblings or meet up with a person from one other household to walk to school.



Healthy Schools



Apprenticeship Champion



## Socialising

The restrictions mean that pupils should not leave or be outside of their home, except for limited purposes. As a result, we are no longer able to allow pupils in Year 10 and 11 to leave the academy site at lunch. We are also asking that pupils do not wait for each other at the end of the school day but take the most direct route home. Again, they may walk with siblings or meet up with a person from one other household to walk to school.

## Extra-curricular activities

The government guidance states that extra curricular activities are no longer permitted unless they are for educational purposes. This means that after school clubs will be suspended for the next four weeks but that boosters can still continue to run as normal.

As always, pupils should try to keep all contact with others to a minimum and avoid busy areas. Whenever they go out, they should continue to maintain social distancing, wash their hands regularly and avoid touching their face.

We understand that this is a very difficult time for parents and pupils and we thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please contact [admin@castlefordacademy.com](mailto:admin@castlefordacademy.com).

Yours faithfully



**Mr G Panayiotou**  
Headteacher

Yours faithfully



**Mrs D Cook**  
Associate Headteacher

