

Dear families,

The festive season is upon us, and the Autumn term draws to a close. Like so many others, this school term has again been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. From the end of October, we spent weeks under the direction of the CWAC Public Health team, and we thank them for their support during this challenging time. At its peak, the outbreak affected about 30 pupils at any one time; staff absence peaked at 16 staff off, which placed a significant burden on operations this half term. I am immensely grateful to all staff for pitching in and covering lessons for absent colleagues. Thankfully, pupil cases are now down to single figures and the vast majority of staff have returned to work. The additional measures we put in place in school and now in the wider community will hopefully support us all in celebrating Christmas with friends and family with as little disruption as possible. Thank you so much for the support in giving us timely updates of illness whether COVID related or not. This allowed us to give clear and up to date information with Public Health in their support for the school.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions, we were delighted to see the return of so many sporting fixtures back in full swing. I was delighted to see our Year 6 football team beat Mill View Primary School 4-1 in the second round of the Chester Primary Cup, with parents finally able to watch the team in action on the school field. There will be more sporting activity in the New Year and we look forward to continuing to be competitive in this area.

This term has also seen the introduction of chickens to the daily life at Blue Coat. Unbelievably, right in the middle of a COVID outbreak, we were hit with new regulations for keeping birds, to try to stop the spread of avian flu! This meant that the chickens needed to be kept inside. Unfortunately, Storm Arwen did not like our first structure, and this ended up on the other side of the school field, mangled and in pieces. Thankfully, Mr Wilson and I have now created a more weatherproof version, and the chickens are happy in their new enclosure. We have a full army of helpers for the Christmas Holidays and hope that in the New Year, once regulations for avian flu are relaxed, the children will be able to play more of an active role in looking after them.

Even though it has been a challenging term we have achieved so much. I am in a fortunate position to see the children every school day and never take that for granted. At times we need to stop and remember the positives we have achieved and not just look at what we need to do to improve. Some changes can be gradual but overtime can be huge. We sometimes miss the change because it is gradual. The atmosphere in school, day in day out, is a very positive one with a buzz in classrooms and children enjoying their learning. The attitude to learning from the children is fantastic and we can continue to build the solid foundations on which future learning can be based. They, like us, all deserve a holiday to recharge for January.

Clothing

We are seeing an increasing amount of lost property in school and it is sometimes difficult to reunite it with its owner. Please could we ask that all children's clothing is clearly named and easily identifiable, so that it can be returned if lost. Thank you.

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Festive Films / Nativities

We do hope that you enjoyed watching the children's performances that were sent out this week. Please do remember, the films must not be shared on social media and are only for the school community. The children and staff have done brilliantly to put this together, especially considering that for a large part of this term, there were many teachers and teaching assistants absent and new regulations meant that singing was not permitted inside! I am sure we all have our own fond memories of what we were in our Christmas Performances (I was a donkey one year and then Joseph the following year!) and we want to provide those memories for the children.

Father Christmas visit

Today, we were lucky to be able to get Father Christmas himself to come and visit the children. Aided and supported by his helper, the Sleepy Elf, the children laughed and sang and had a fabulous time – they should be bringing home a small gift with them today.



Chester FC ticket winner

This week's nomination for excellent application of our PE and Sport Values of teamwork, resilience, respect, self-belief and determination is Summer. Summer and her family will get the tickets for Chester's home match against Fylde FC.

Click on the link for the QPHS Newsletter: [Queen's Park High School latest newsletter](#)

COVID updates

From Tuesday 14th December, a new national approach to daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 was introduced (including until the end of this term). All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 – whether Omicron or not – should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating. Daily testing by close contacts will help to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, pupils should take an LFD each day for 7 days and parents/carers report the results through to the COVID email (covid@chesterbluecoatce.cheshire.sch.uk) If they test negative, they can continue to attend school, unless they unwell/symptomatic. If they test positive, they should self-isolate and order/book a PCR test to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should

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continue to carry out the remainder of the daily LFD tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive. For primary aged children LFD test kits are available through the usual routes (community test sites, local pharmacies or online). Children under five years old do not need to take part in daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 and do not need to isolate.

Roving vaccination clinics message from Cheshire West and Chester

We have been asked to share the following with you by Cheshire West and Chester Council. Please see below, details of the roving vaccination clinics for this week and next:

Chester Cathedral – 16th December, 11am-6pm and 17th-21st December, 10am-5pm. Clinics will be offering both AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccinations for first and second doses and Pfizer booster doses.

Raffle Draw

Thank you to everyone who supported the school in the purchase of a raffle ticket for the Oliver Twist. The raffle draw took place today and the winner was Daniel Kulig in Year 4.

Thank you again for your support, kindness and understanding throughout this term. I hope that you all can have some quality time with family and enjoy a wonderful festive break. We look forward to welcoming the children back into school on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

With very best wishes,



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