

Fulston Manor School

Brenchley Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4EG
Email mail@fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk

Tel 01795 475228
www.fulstonmanor.kent.sch.uk



Academy Trust Registered in England: Company No. 7343725

SBU/NFI

2nd December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

RE: UPDATE -TUESDAY, 2ND DECEMBER 2020

I must start by apologising for the number of letters I have sent you in the last two days; the aim is not to bombard you, but to be as transparent as possible with information and so I hope that you can understand the current climate requires regular updates.

In relation to the heating situation, clearly this is far from ideal and whilst rooms are not as warm as they would usually be we have now got them within the guidance set out by The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Students can continue to wear coats, etc., in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13. We will continue to try to expedite the repair and I will update you as soon as I have further information about this.

In relation to the positive COVID case, I have received a number of fairly blunt requests/directions from parents to shut the school. It has never been the guidance that one or a few cases should lead to whole school closures but, aside from that, I feel that I should advise you of a change to the DfE guidance. This was updated last Friday, to state that schools (Headteachers) cannot take the decision to close the school in relation to COVID; we cannot do so for operational reasons (i.e., staffing pressures) or due to cases. It is only with the express permission of a minister from the DfE that the "DfE Contingency Plan" will be implemented, which would then consider school closure. Even then, this would not be closure to all year groups; they would only put in place any closures in an area where they believe the incidence of COVID is particularly high and, whilst this has not been defined, they clearly do not believe that Swale currently comes into that category.

Whilst I fully understand the frustrations and worries of parents around COVID and around the high cases in Swale, we are not unfortunately able to control this. We would therefore ask parents to please be mindful that we are following all guidance that is issued to us and to direct concerns around whether schools should have the autonomy to make closure decisions to your MP or to the DfE.

I will continue to update you regarding cases and other matters regularly.

Yours faithfully

Mrs S Burden
Head of School