



The Woodlands Academy

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Headteacher: Mrs M Hockham

19 January 2022

Dear Parents,

Following our return this term, we are still experiencing some challenges with staffing levels. This has now become increasingly difficult to manage on a day to day basis.

As you may be aware, the number of positive COVID cases in Scarborough and North Yorkshire may have decreased slightly but the area is still experiencing a high level of absence due to COVID.

In addition, there is still a national shortage of suitably qualified and experienced staff, particularly at the entry level, for many sectors such as general teaching assistants, care assistants and NHS staff.

Each week we review our staffing for the following week to identify any gaps taking into consideration current levels of sickness and other variables such as training courses, meetings with other professionals and parents. Usually these gaps are filled with temporary staff from agencies but with so many schools suffering from staff shortages these agencies are struggling to provide suitable staff.

We also recognise that supply staff aren't always appropriate in our setting due to the nature of our students and our very child-centred approach. In the best interests of the students we have a limit on the number of supply staff that we will use on any one day.

Taking all these factors into account I have to consider other options. After careful consideration and discussion with the Senior Leadership Team and Chair of Governors, I have taken the decision to move to a blended learning approach with students receiving **one day of home/offsite learning and four days in school.**

Our joint experience over the past 18 months has shown us how we can effectively support students and parents and carers through this approach and we are hopeful it will only be for a short period.

Earlier in the year when there was much greater uncertainty how the pandemic would develop, all class leads took time to prepare for the possible implementation of blended learning, so I am confident students learning will progress as normal.



This approach will continue until the end of next week, when it will be reviewed. We will do our best to provide as much notice as possible as to when all students can return to school for the full week provision.

I appreciate this may be challenging for some families and I am happy to have discussions on an individual basis. Our most important duty of course is to safeguard the wellbeing of all students and we don't feel we have any other options as we don't feel we have adequate staffing to operate at full capacity.

If you would like further discussions please do contact me on: michelle.hockham@woodlands.n-yorks.sch.uk or 07422 942 354.

Yours faithfully,

Michelle Hockham
Headteacher

Timetable for pupils not in school:

Willow Class	Wednesday
Oak Class	Monday
Elm Class	Friday
Foxes Class	Monday
Badgers Class	Tuesday
Magpies Class	Thursday
Kestrel Class	Tuesday
Robins Class	Friday
Owls Class	Wednesday
Kingfisher Class	Thursday

If your child accesses home to school transport provided by the Local Authority please inform them of the day above your child will not be in school.