



# Aston Manor Academy

All different • All equal • All achieving

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HEADTEACHER: JILL SWEENEY



21<sup>st</sup> June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please see information below from Birmingham City Council.

With Covid cases rising in Birmingham, the city is now an area of enhanced support, focussed on increasing vaccination take-up, testing and support for those self-isolating.

Over the next few weeks there will be surge vaccination in 15 wards with the lowest take-up and highest Covid rates, along with greater walk-in capacity at vaccination sites.

The 15 wards - Alum Rock; Lozells; Bordesley & Highgate; Heartlands; Bordesley Green; Sparkhill; Birchfield; Small Heath; Ward End; Newtown; Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East; Aston; Nechells; Holyhead; Balsall Heath West - will also be offered doorstep lateral flow testing, and PCR testing will be offered for schools and universities. There will also be **further support for those who have to isolate**.

The government has also issued new advice on travel and socialising, including minimising travel into and out of the area and not taking unnecessary journeys.

In Birmingham 61,000 people who are over 50 years old are yet to take up the offer of the first dose of the vaccine, despite the NHS making offers and lots of different ways of getting the jab. They are extremely vulnerable to the Delta variant and there is a real risk that given the number of people not vaccinated this will turn into hospitalisation.

Cllr Ian Ward, leader of Birmingham City Council, said: "The rise in cases, linked to the Delta variant of the virus which spreads more easily, means that once again we all have a role to play to keep our families, friends and communities safe. We must all do everything we can to avoid further restrictions.

- Take extra care and meet people outside, rather than inside, wherever possible
- Follow all the rules around social distancing, face coverings, washing hands, wiping surfaces and keeping windows open.
- Get your vaccination when it is offered to you.
- Take free twice-weekly tests (these are the lateral flow kits for people who do not have Covid symptoms). If positive, book a PCR test immediately to confirm the result.

If you test positive it is really important you self-isolate. However, I understand that people have concerns about this which is why there is financial support available. You may be eligible if you are on a low income, cannot work from home or face financial hardship.

Over the last 15 months we've worked together as a city to keep people safe. It's been tough but we've supported each other and I want to thank everyone for following the guidance.

Now, together, let's do everything we can to reverse this rise in cases, so that life can finally get back to normal.

We have asked a number of things of government to help us reduce case rates:





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- Enhanced supply chain of Pfizer and AZ vaccines to support increased targeted-pop up in the 15 ward areas similar to the approach to Bolton.
- Pilot of vaccination of SEND children aged 12 years and above not in residential care
- Pilot of vaccination of school children, starting with 15 to 19 years cohort and work down so that students are vaccinated before returning home for school holidays.
- LFD testing kits for door to door and workplace distribution
- PCR kits for schools and universities.

We will do our bit so I'm calling on government to ensure we have the right tools to enable us to do this."

Testing is playing a vital role in keeping life moving for us all. [Free tests are available for all adults in England](#). Collect a pack of tests or order them direct to your home and report your results online.

Travel safely and only if necessary. If using public transport, remember to wear a face covering, unless you are exempt, sanitise your hands regularly and keep your distance where possible.

The second dose of the vaccine helps to provide maximum protection. The vaccine reduces chances of hospitalisation by 85%. [Make sure you attend both appointments](#).

## **What does this mean for schools?**

### **End of Term Activities**

**Transition** – all transition days will now be virtual at all transition points. There may be exceptional cases for pupils with specialist needs where a virtual transition is not possible or effective. In these circumstances robust individual risk assessments will be in place.

**End of term trips** - Following the announcement of Birmingham being an area of enhanced support, the government issued new advice on travel and socialising, including minimising travel into and out of the area (Birmingham) and not taking unnecessary journeys. Trips outside of the Birmingham boundary should not go ahead, and all other trips need a robust risk assessment and follow strict safety measures. Trips should be cancelled and any COVID-19 outbreaks recorded.

**Sports Day** - Sport days are still able to go ahead, but strict risk assessments need to be in place and pupils in different bubbles will be kept apart.

**Will summer schools still go ahead?** - Schools will need to ensure strict risk assessments are in place for school providers in preparation. The data is due to be reviewed in 2 weeks from 21<sup>st</sup> June so we hope to know more by then.

**We will keep you updated with any news.**

Yours sincerely,

**J Sweeney**  
**Headteacher**

