



Monday 23rd January 2022

Dear parents/carers,

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Apologies for having to welcome you to 2022 with a COVID-19 related email. However, given the incredibly high case numbers at the moment, I am sure that many of you have been affected by Covid over this winter break. If you are currently unwell, I send get well wishes and hope that everyone has managed to celebrate and enjoy some family time together despite illness and periods of self-isolation.

The Department for Education issued updated guidance for schools yesterday morning. While some of the guidance is only relevant for secondary schools, some of the updates are important for you to be aware of and so I ask that you please take the time to read the following carefully.

Changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and individuals do not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19

Adults who are fully vaccinated and children over 5, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Children under 5 are not being advised to take part in daily testing of close contacts. If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and should not start daily testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result. If the test is positive, they should follow the stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection.



Asymptomatic testing and confirmatory PCR tests

Staff will continue to take their twice weekly LFD tests to help reduce the risk of transmission. There is no need for primary age pupils to regularly test, unless they have been identified as a contact for someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and therefore advised to take lateral flow tests for 7 days. I know that some of you do use LFD tests with your children and you may wish to administer a test before their return to school on Tuesday.

If your child has symptoms of COVID-19, they should not attend school and they should take a PCR test as soon as possible. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, individuals should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of a positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the child can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Learning from Home

Where a child has tested positive for COVID-19 but has very mild or no symptoms, then work which is year group specific and relevant to school topics will be available. Your child's class teaching team will make contact via Seesaw regarding this.

Where children are unwell with COVID-19 or absent as a result of any other illness, there is obviously no expectation to complete any schoolwork.

Should whole classes or year groups be required to self-isolate, a full timetable of home learning will be published for each day, to include live meetings via Zoom.

Additional Control Measures

Whilst the Government does not currently recommend that primary aged pupils in England wear face coverings, that remains your choice, as it has been in our school throughout the pandemic.

Staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas of school, unless exempt. Staff members may choose to wear face coverings when teaching, but they are not required to do so.

As before, we would politely request that all adults on school grounds consider wearing a face covering to support our control measures/.

We will continue to ensure good hygiene for everyone by asking children to clean their hands regularly and adopt the 'catch it, bin it, kill it approach. We will continue to ensure that all areas of school are well ventilated and touch points are cleaned regularly. As before, you may wish to send your child with an additional jumper/sweatshirt as their classroom may be cold due to windows and doors being kept open.

Where additional measures need to be introduced as a result of a COVID-19 outbreak in school, these will be communicated to you.

Staff absence

As I am sure you will be aware, staff absence may impact on your child's provision. Wherever possible, staff absences will be covered by someone known to the class. We will do everything we possibly can to reduce disruption to the day-to-day running of our school and to support the emotional wellbeing and progress of all children.

We are looking forward to seeing you back at school tomorrow. Thanks for your continued support and here's to 2022! As always, please do not hesitate to contact us at school if you have any concerns or questions.

Warmest regards

Mrs Essex and the RMPA team