Wednesday 15th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please find information below about some of the changes from the latest Covid Guidance relevant to schools and early years settings. As you will be aware this situation is a rapidly changing one and as a result the guidance is also changing fast. I will try to keep you as up to date as possible with information to help you keep your family and our school community as safe and well as possible.

## **What has changed?**

**The self-isolation advice for contacts of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) has changed to reduce the risk of spread to others**.

Anyone aged **5 years and over** who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 and who is not legally required to self-isolate is now strongly advised to take an LFD test every day for 7 days. If any of these LFD tests are positive, they should self-isolate in order to protect other people. The public health advice for people with symptoms of, or a positive test result for COVID-19 remains the same for everyone.

More detailed information can be found on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) website.

**Close contacts of COVID-19**

From Tuesday 14 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.

Daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the [Online Reporting System](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result?utm_source=13%20December%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) and to their setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the [Sunday 12 December press release](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/daily-rapid-testing-for-covid-19-contacts-launches-this-week?utm_source=13%20December%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19). This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return in January.

If they test positive, they should self-isolate and [order a PCR test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test?utm_source=13%20December%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) 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 continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.

### **If you're identified as a close contact of someone with the Omicron variant of COVID-19**

PCR tests are genome-sequenced to identify COVID variants. If an Omicron case is identified, NHS Test and Trace will get in touch with cases and contacts to let them know. If this is the case, you must stay at home and self-isolate for the full self-isolation period.

**What measures are we taking in school?**

We are continuing to follow strict hygiene measures around school and are trying to ensure the children wash their hands thoroughly and regularly. We are spending lots of time outside and even when we are inside the doors are wide open. We are also fortunate to be a very spacious building with lots of high ceilings and good air flow.

Staff continue to test twice weekly on lateral flows and we are also wearing face coverings again in communal areas. Staff members who have been close contacts are also wearing masks while in setting and are on rotas which keep them mainly in the outdoor area to reduce the risk of any possible transmission.

So far, although we have had some cases in school, we are doing well to keep the transmission low and we will do our very best to continue this into the new year.

Thank you for your continued support of the staff team as we all try to navigate these difficult times. The staff are doing a wonderful job of keeping the children as sheltered as possible from the situation and ensuring that they continue to have lots of Christmassy fun in school.

As always, if you have any questions or feedback please don’t hesitate to come and see me.

Best wishes,



Catherine King