



11th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID Update

As you are all aware the situation regarding COVID and the Omicron new variant is ever changing and we continue to find out more about the new the virus. The limited availability of testing kits, both lateral flow and PCRs is also causing an issue both locally and nationally. This week we were informed of the temporary suspension of confirmatory PCR tests following a positive result on a lateral flow device (LFD)

Thank you to all those parents that tested their child before returning to school as this certainly detected positive cases and mitigated the risk of transmission of infection.

I just want to clarify the current precautions our school community can take to ensure the following:

- Children remain in school and classes remain open: If there is a substantial outbreak in one year we will take advice from public health and class closure may be recommended
- To avoid returning to class bubbles
- Staff remain COVID free: To reduce the likelihood of classes being closed due to COVID related staff absences.
- To limit the level of disruption to children's education and well-being.
- To reduce the impact on working parents
- To continue to provide as full and enriching education as possible, to also include sports clubs, choir and breakfast club etc.
- To reduce risks to the most vulnerable.

Unfortunately, the above cannot be achieved if we do not work together as a community and adhere to the following measures



Through learning and loving we will follow Jesus.

GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES & SCHOOL MEASURES	WHY ?
<p>ROUTINE LATERAL FLOW TESTING: We ask that children routinely undertake lateral flow tests twice a week (Sunday and Wednesday evening). We recognise, however, the limited availability of tests at the moment, all you can do is your best with what is available.</p>	<p>The vast majority of cases amongst children have been asymptomatic. An outbreak amongst children and staff would occur incredibly quickly without quick identification and isolation.</p>
<p>IN THE EVENT OF A POSITIVE TEST: As mandated by the government, children who have tested positive must isolate for 7 days. If they do not display symptoms, they can then return to school on the eighth day following two negative lateral flow tests, and must then take daily lateral flow tests until the tenth day.</p>	<p>This has been reduced from 10 days and is mandated by the government for all UK citizens to reduce transmission rates</p>
<p>IN THE EVENT OF A POSITIVE CASE IN CLASS: The Government Guidance says that children aged 5 and over that have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID are not legally required to isolate however you are strongly advised to take a LFT for 7 days</p>	<p>The Omicron variant spreads far more quickly between children and adults. It is likely that other children/staff will test positive. Incubation periods for Omicron are shorter before displaying symptoms, if any.</p>
<p>OUTBREAK SITUATIONS: If there is an outbreak in one particular year group (10% of the class) we will discuss our outbreak management plan with Public Health and either revert to class bubbles or as a last resort close the class, The duration of closure is to be determined by Public Health depending on each circumstance. Remote learning will be provided.</p>	<p>This is a threshold mandated by Public Health England to limit outbreaks and is unchanged from last term. These kind of closures are what our measures are aiming to avoid.</p>
<p>COLD-LIKE SYMPTOMS: Anyone displaying any symptoms, including cold-like symptoms, no matter how mild, are asked to increase lateral flow testing while symptoms persist. Parents know their children better than anybody and can identify when they are just 'not right', so a PCR may be appropriate in these situations. PCR test should still be taken when the child /adult is displaying symptoms</p>	<p>Early research into the Omicron variant indicates that symptoms are often similar to a cold, e.g. runny nose, fatigue, etc. The official COVID symptoms are less likely to be displayed amongst children. We also recognise that runny noses are so prevalent at this time of year and the vast majority will not be COVID. We just need to catch any positive cases as early as possible before it leads to an outbreak</p>
<p>COVID IN THE HOUSEHOLD: Children can attend school as long as they do not have symptoms but as a close contact should test daily for 7 days using a LFT</p>	<p>Experience tells us that other household members also test positive at a later date, usually during the isolation period of the positive case.</p>
<p>GENERAL MITIGATING MEASURES: Ventilation and good hygiene continue to be the key measures to reduce risks of transmission. We</p>	<p>Airborn transmission is the most common way to become infected, so clean air is a crucial measure to implement.</p>

have CO2 monitors in every classroom to indicate when thresholds require extra ventilation.	
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As always please do not hesitate to contact the office if you are unsure what to do or for further advice.

Kind Regards

Mrs Newton