



03.01.2022

Return to school: Wednesday 5th January

Dear Parent/Carer,

Happy New Year. I hope that you had a very happy and healthy festive period. As you will be aware from daily news reports COVID-19 infection rates remain very high and the Omicron variant is spreading rapidly. There is some encouraging news in that the variant appears to make people less ill and hospitalisations are still well below pre-vaccination levels but our NHS is still under great strain and so I would urge you, if you have not yet had the vaccination, please do so and help protect our community and the NHS who care for us.

Our school will continue to operate as we did before Christmas and there are just a couple of rules and guidance changes that I should like to make you aware of as they seem to be causing some confusion.

If anyone in your household has COVID-19 symptoms which are:

A persistent cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste or smell then you should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. You should arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible. If this PCR test result is positive, you must continue to self-isolate. On day 6 of your isolation period, you may take a lateral flow test. If this returns a negative result then you should test again on day 7 and if this test is also totally negative (a faint positive line is a positive!) then you may leave self-isolation. If you do not return two consecutive negative lateral flow tests then you should continue to test daily until this is the case eg. Day 7 and day 8 or day 8 and day 9 or until you reach the full 10 days of isolation.

If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, but you have a positive PCR test result, you must stay at home and self-isolate.

If you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 or have had prolonged contact with someone who has the virus, you are at significantly higher risk of becoming infected yourself. However, medical advice suggests that if you have been double vaccinated and had a booster jab you are much less likely to become severely ill with Covid-19 and also less likely to spread it to others but it is still possible. The latest government advice is as follows:

- if you are aged 18 years 6 months or over and you are not fully vaccinated*(you are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after your second vaccination), and you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are legally required to stay at home and self-isolate
- if you are fully vaccinated or aged under 18 years and 6 months, and you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are not legally required to self-isolate. However, you are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for 7 days, and to self-isolate if any of these test results is positive





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- Pupils of our school identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 may continue to come to school as normal but take a lateral flow test every day for 7 days. If a pupil tests positive on a lateral flow test within this time the parent should immediately isolate them and book a PCR test. Pupils who do not test positive within the 7-day period can continue to come to school as normal throughout.
- Pupils who test positive for Covid-19 may now return to school after a 7-day self-isolation period **but only if they return two consecutive negative lateral flow tests on day 6 and 7. A faint positive line is still positive and should be treated as such.**
- If a pupil returns a negative LF test on day 6 but a positive on day 7 then they are not ready to return to school and the parent must test again on day 8 and day 9 and the same rule applies up until the 10-day isolation period is over or a pupil has 2 consecutive negative lateral flow tests on two consecutive days beginning on day 6. I hope this makes sense!

In our school, adults shall continue to wear face masks in communal areas but not when working with children unless there is a specific reason to do so or if a member of staff wishes to wear a mask to feel comfortable or to protect a vulnerable pupil. Face coverings will be worn by staff and adults (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas. Health advice continues to be that children in primary schools do not need to wear face coverings.

I hope that we can welcome some more volunteers into school this term and our intention is to do so as we need all the help we can get to be honest but we must continue to proceed with caution and put the health and safety of everyone first. I shall update our lovely group of volunteer helpers as soon as I have consulted with my team and governors and decided who and when we invite more people into school. I am very appreciative of your patience and support.

I hope this letter helps you understand the new guidance for schools and how it affects your family. If you have any worries or concerns, please contact us and we shall do all we can to help. Thanks for your patience and understanding as we try to stay ahead of this evolving situation.

Best wishes and I look forward to seeing you all back at school on Wednesday morning!

Mr Brown

