



28th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back from the half term break, whilst it's been a bit blustery, I hope that your children have had a well-deserved rest.

As you will be aware, last Monday the Government made an announcement stating that there is increasing confidence that the country is moving from a pandemic to living and dealing with COVID-19. Guidance for schools followed, with [guidance](#) for parents and carers also being updated.

As the scientists acknowledge, the virus hasn't gone away and as such, we will continue to follow guidance for schools:

- Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

I want to reassure you that your child's safety has been at the forefront of our decision making throughout this situation and will continue to be our primary considerations going forwards, along with our duty of care to them, the staff and the wider community.

Attendance – staff and pupils

Attendance remains mandatory for all and it is a priority. Please ensure that your child attends every day possible and arrives to school promptly at the start of their allotted time (EYFS and KS1 8.40am – KS2 8.50am) as lessons start promptly.

Classrooms and resources

Children will share school resources, but must still have their own water bottle please. Children will also continue to wear active wear uniform (PE kit) to school on PE days.

Face coverings

You do not need to continue wearing face coverings around the school grounds, unless you choose to do so for personal reasons. We would appreciate it if you could continue to wear a face covering when in the reception area due to the confined space and lack of ventilation.

Hygiene

Children will continue to wash their hands regularly throughout the day. Tissues and bins are in each classroom so that children can 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. Please continue to encourage this at home.



Staff

Staff have been twice weekly testing since January 2021 as directed by the DfE but, moving forward, this will no longer be the case as the DfE will now stop sending LFD test kits into primary schools. Staff will still test should they feel unwell, as a proactive measure if LFD tests continue to be readily available privately. Staff will no longer need to wear masks or visors in classrooms or corridors, but may choose to at other times, as a personal choice. This will be monitored and reviewed based on numbers of local cases. However, face coverings will be encouraged in areas where ventilation is not possible and in tight spaces.

If your child is unwell

Please do not send your child to school if they have a temperature or are unwell at all. This is for the safety of everybody. If your child becomes ill whilst at school, you will be asked to collect them immediately. Please ensure that contact details are up to date with the office.

If children display symptoms of COVID-19, they will be isolated until you arrive. You should then make arrangements for them to be tested, using a PCR or LFD. Please ensure that you inform the front office of the result as soon as possible. A positive result will mean that the child will need to isolate for up to 10 days, following the latest [NHS guidance](#) and [Government advice](#). Currently, if your child is unwell with other symptoms you can LFD test them and should this be positive you do not need to go for a PCR but may choose to. Your child should self-isolate in this case for up to 10 days, or in line with the guidance previously sent out.

The Government are keen that everybody continues to respond positively with the track and trace system. Schools are not legally bound to do this, but I will keep you informed of cases if they start to increase beyond a small number across the school. If the LFD is negative, we would ask that your child does not return until they are 'well'. I will monitor guidance, as we know that this will no doubt change in the coming weeks.

Know the symptoms of Covid-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Other symptoms linked with COVID-19 include shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle ache, sore throat, headache, stuffy or runny nose, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. Any of these symptoms may also have another cause.

Isolation

The guidance indicates that whilst the law has changed, the directives for public safety remain. We will follow this guidance, so isolation continues to be up to 10 days, unless there are 2 negative tests



on day 5 and 6, 24 hours apart. Isolation will finish after day 5 at the earliest if you test first thing in the morning on day 5 and 6.

I understand that it may be tempting, in some circumstances, to get children back to school when they appear to be better, regardless of LFD or PCR testing. Although there is no legal requirement to self-isolate, in their [‘What parents need to know’](#) document, the DFE have stated, *‘If you insist on your child attending nursery, school, or college when they have symptoms, they can take the decision to refuse your child if, in their reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.’* It is very important that these isolation procedures are followed by staff and children so that the risk of transmission is kept to a minimum. We have been very fortunate not to have many serious cases amongst staff and children, however, some of our staff who have tested positive have experienced severe enough symptoms to be unable to work for at least a week; still testing positive on day 7 and 8. If we increase the risk of infection further by allowing children and staff into school whilst still possibly infectious, we increase the risk of further staff absences. The outcome could be not being able to teach classes or set remote learning effectively, cancellation of trips, clubs, residential etc as we would be unable to staff them.

Please continue to liaise with the school office about your child’s return date after testing positive, given our school protocols. We will review this as and when the guidance is further updated.

Close contact changes

The new guidance has brought an end to routine contact tracing. Close contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily LFD tests for 7 days. Staff, children and young people should attend their education settings as usual.

‘Children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has COVID-19 should continue to attend the setting as normal ‘.

Possible further disruption to schooling

It is almost guaranteed now that schools will remain open, but there is the very real chance that there may be further disruption to ‘schooling’ for individual children who need to isolate or are unwell. Please remember that remote learning will only be provided if your child tests positive for Covid-19 and is well enough to access work. Any moves to remote learning for full classes will be communicated if this is directed by Public Health, however I think this is very unlikely now.

If cases rise across school, additional measures may need to be reintroduced to reduce transmission including face coverings during drop off and pick up, reduced mixing of classes and suspension of after school clubs for example. If these measures are needed I will inform you as soon as possible.

I apologise for the length of this letter and how much information is in it. I am hoping that we are nearing a time when we will be able to keep our letters to a one-page maximum again. I am sure that there will be further guidance changes in the coming weeks or months and we will keep you up

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dated as and when we have new information. We thank you, as always, for the support you have given us whilst on this journey.

Yours faithfully,

T Hinkley
Headteacher