

04.01.22

Return to School Covid-19 Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

HAPPY NEW YEAR! We hope you all had an enjoyable break and are looking forward to the term ahead. Spring term is always nicer as the days get lighter and spring begins to brighten everything.

As you will know, the country currently has high levels of the Omicron covid variant circulating in communities across the country. The department for education has updated guidance for schools, which for primaries, brings very little change. I have also reviewed and updated our covid risk assessment, which you can find on the school website.

The main changes are as follows:

Rules on positive covid cases and isolation

The guidance advises that staff and pupils who have tested positive by PCR test can take an LFD test on day 6 and day 7 of isolation and if these are 24 hours apart, both are negative, and symptoms are gone, with no raised temperature, staff and pupils can return to school. However, please be aware that the guidance also recommends working from home and avoiding crowded places until the remaining isolation period up to 10 days is over. This makes it difficult for schools, as classrooms are by definition crowded places. We will support parents who choose to complete the full 10 day isolation. If you wish your child to return on day 7, we would like you to share with us the two negative lateral flow tests. Any child who returns with negative LFD before day 10 will be sent home if staff feel they are displaying symptoms.

If high cases mean staffing school becomes a problem

The guidance suggests if staffing levels fall as a result of positive cases, schools may group children together in larger classes or use other staff within school in order to keep face to face learning going. In extreme cases, we may need to switch to remote learning for one or more classes, but this will be an absolute last resort.

We need your help!

Of course, the best way to avoid high case numbers in school is for us all to work together to reduce the risks. We will still be carrying out enhanced cleaning in school and making ventilation a priority, along with all the other measures on our risk assessments.

We would like to request that parents and carers help us by:

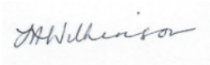
- being alert for a range of symptoms and not bringing your child to school if you suspect they may have covid (the new variant can be more like a cold than a persistent cough)

- collecting children promptly and arranging a PCR test if they display symptoms in school
- wearing face coverings when dropping off or collecting children (unless exempt of course)
- drop and go – avoid gathering to chat in groups
- socially distance from other parents/carers and staff
- contact the office by telephone or email where possible, to avoid in person contact
- take a LFD test before coming into school for any arranged meetings or groups

It would also be extremely helpful for all parents to check they are still signed up to class dojo – this is our quickest and simplest way to share messages with whole school, classes and individuals.

Let's hope we have a quiet and uneventful start to this calendar year and everyone stays fit and well.

yours sincerely,



Jo Wilkinson
Headteacher