

25th January 2022

Dear Parents & Carers

As you will be aware, Covid rates in our local community are very high. This week, we have unfortunately had an outbreak in school resulting in a significant number of staff and pupils testing positive. In addition, a number of pupils have a member of their household isolating following a positive test result. We currently have far more households affected by Covid than we have experienced at any time since the pandemic began.

I would like to remind everyone that the symptoms of Covid can be much broader than those highlighted in government guidance. Symptoms of positive Covid cases in our school community have presented as sickness and diarrhoea, rashes, headaches, cold like symptoms, earache and sore throats, in addition to the more typical symptoms of temperature, cough and loss of taste or smell.

The latest guidance puts greater value on a positive Lateral Flow Tests and since the 11th January asymptomatic cases rely fully on positive LFT as confirmation of having COVID, which must still be reported on gov.uk without the need for PCR confirmation.

With case numbers at the high current rate and the faster transmission of the Omicron variant we request that in line with our updated risk assessment, students who have been identified as a contact, including those with a positive household member, take a daily LFT for 7 days. This should be done, and a negative result achieved before the student attends school each day. Any student exhibiting symptoms of Covid should also continue to test and isolate where appropriate, as has been the case throughout the pandemic.

We appreciate that testing can be a challenge for some of our young people. Previously we asked parents to undertake a test on your child's behalf in these circumstances, and we still encourage this, however, with most adults now being double or triple jabbed there is a greater chance they may have high levels of immunity and so this approach is no longer as effective to measure likely infection levels, particularly in younger students who may not yet be vaccinated themselves. We can supply students with nasal only swabs on request, as for many these are far less invasive.

We are committed to running as safely, smoothly, and consistently as possible for all of our students and are striving to protect their access to safe, onsite, quality education. With this in mind, we ask all parents and carers to support us to ensure that we reduce the likelihood of a widespread outbreak across a number of classes and protect our vulnerable school community.

Our Covid Risk Assessment is available on the school website, and you are of course welcome to call the school if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully



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