



St George's C of E Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year; hopefully you had a relaxing and joyful Christmas. We enjoyed welcoming the children back to school this morning and we're ready for the term ahead.

As you will no doubt be aware, cases of COVID-19 have continued to increase both nationally and locally over the last few weeks. With the aforementioned in mind, I wanted to make you aware of the mitigations that will be implemented from today:

- Drop-off and collection arrangements will remain the same. If you wish to chat to a member of staff, we politely request you wear a mask (unless medically exempt). This includes the reception area.
- We are politely asking parents to not come into school unless you have a pre-arranged meeting or it is something extremely urgent. Please ensure your child has everything they need for the day ahead as we cannot accept any forgotten items via reception due to transmission.
- We will continue to reinforce the importance of regular hand washing with soap and water or using hand sanitiser when soap and water are not readily available.
- We will continue to promote good respiratory hygiene and "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" messages to encourage children to catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue and dispose of it in the nearest waste bin.
- Well-ventilated classrooms, which means a window or two will be open throughout the day and classroom doors stay open throughout the school day.
- Limited mixing of children in school where possible.

If confirmed cases begin to rise in school, we will take every measure we can to limit transmission, following our COVID-19 contingency framework, which has been in place since September, and is available on each school's website.

COVID 19

Unfortunately, Covid cases in the local area remain high and as such we ask all families to remain vigilant for the symptoms of Covid.

Do not send your child in if they have:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If your child feels unwell or has cold symptoms, please check they do not have covid with a LFT. It has been reported that people have been experiencing different symptoms with the new variant and this will limit infections in school. New symptoms include: runny nose, headache, fatigue (severe and mild), sneezing and sore throat.

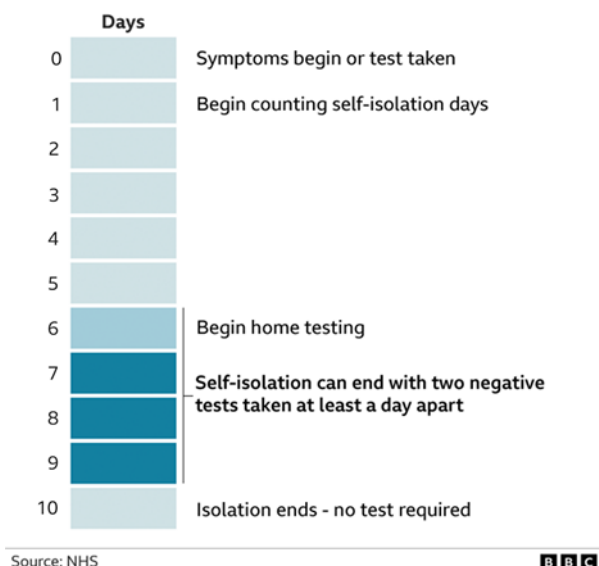
If your child tests positive on an LFD test, they should isolate immediately for 10 days but they do not need to get a PCR test. If they get a negative LFD test on day 6 and 7 (24 hours apart) they can then return to school on day 7. If they continue to test positive, they should continue to isolate for the full 10 days or until their temperature has gone if symptoms have appeared and continue after the 10 days is over.

LFT tests can be obtained from your pharmacy - this the quickest way to get a rapid test for most people.

Please remember to inform school of any pupil absence by 9.20am. We now have an answering machine to make this an easier process.

There have been national changes to the possible length of isolation which can be seen in the diagram below: Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19.

How seven-day isolation rule works in the UK



Staff Shortages

I am sure you are aware that many businesses and services are currently suffering from staff shortages due to high rates of staff contracting COVID-19. As a school we usually rely on supply teachers who live in the local area to provide staff at short notice. We also have excellent Teaching Assistants who can cover if needed. As we are a DDAT school, if we need staff and they have capacity in one of their other schools, they will loan us staff to help cover classes. In the autumn term, the unavailability of relief staff was an issue; I foresee staff shortages continuing to be a problem and this may cause a significant issue if we cannot safely teach and supervise all the children in school. Moving to online learning for some groups of children will be a last resort and only after discussion with the CEO of DDAT to rule out any other solutions.

Please do not hesitate to speak to us should you have any questions. Should there be any new directives from the DfE, I will contact you at the earliest opportunity to outline any amended arrangements.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in working together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all those in our school community.

Yours sincerely,

Lynne Kilford
Acting Executive Headteacher