



28 February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

RE: Latest government guidance – ‘COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19’

I hope you have had a lovely half term holiday – welcome back to Term 4.

As you may have heard, last week the Government removed the remaining domestic COVID-19 restrictions in England. They have updated their guidance for schools: [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/104422/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance) and for parents/carers: [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

Whilst we are still experiencing high levels of community transmission across the country, there are still very low numbers of hospitalisations in young children. School leaders are re-visiting their risk assessments and school contexts, and may decide to retain some of the mitigation measures they have in place, in order to continue to reduce the risk of transmission – schools will communicate any changes they are making to you directly.

Our schools will continue to:

- Ensure good hygiene routines for everyone
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, especially around key touch-points and shared areas
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated (and continue to use CO2 monitors)
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19 (see below for more information)
- Have contingency plans in place in the event of an outbreak

Key messages:

- Face coverings are no longer advised for children, staff or visitors onsite (*but we will continue to allow people to wear a face covering if they would like to*)
- Clinically extremely vulnerable people will no longer be advised to shield, unless they have received personal advice from their GP/clinician (*please contact your school if this applies to your child*)
- Staff (and students in mainstream secondary schools) are no longer expected to carry out asymptomatic testing twice weekly (primary pupils continue not to be expected to do so) and schools will only be able to order tests in the event of an outbreak (*parents/carers can continue to order LFD tests from local pharmacies and/or online, but free tests will no longer be available from 1 April*)
- Vaccination continues to be recommended for all, with second doses for 12-17 year olds planned and a non-urgent 2-dose schedule for 5-11 year olds coming soon
- Attendance continues to be mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure as many children as possible regularly attend school
- If an individual is unwell (whatever they are ill with) they should stay at home until they are feeling better
- Staff or children who have one of the three key symptoms of COVID-19 or who have a confirmed positive case of COVID-19 should not come to school (see below)

Testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19:

- If an individual develops one or more of the three key symptoms of COVID-19 (below) the guidance remains that they should stay at home, isolate and get a PCR test
 - A new continuous cough
 - A high temperature
 - A loss of, or change in normal sense of, taste or smell(if they have other symptoms, e.g. a runny nose, irritable cough etc they can continue to attend school unless they feel unwell or test positive for COVID-19)
- If the PCR test is negative, they can return to school, assuming they feel well
- If the PCR test is positive, they should isolate for 10 days (or after day 5 if they take two LFD tests that are negative on two consecutive days, they can return to school)
- In most cases, parents and carers will no doubt agree that a child with the key symptoms of COVID-19, or a confirmed positive case of COVID-19, should not attend school given the potential risk to others. However, school leaders can take the decision to refuse to allow a child to attend school if, in their reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19
- Fully vaccinated people should still isolate and test if they develop one or more of the three COVID-19 symptoms
- If a household has a positive case within it, the household should avoid having visitors

Thanks again for your ongoing support – it is very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,



James Passmore
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