



6th December 2021

Dear Parents,

We have, unfortunately, seen a rise in positive COVID cases in staff and children over the last few weeks. We are now at outbreak stage (more than 5 cases in a group or 10% of the school population). This is the case across many schools in Devon and the Southwest and a situation that was predicted by Public Health England as we move towards colder months. COVID-19 case rates in Devon have continued to rise and, overall, Devon's case rate remains above the national average. The greater prevalence is being seen in school age children and their families. Schools are following the latest Public Health advice to control the spread of the virus. The South West Directors of Public Health Consensus statement for schools advises schools to have a range of measures in place up to the end of term including the need to reduce mixing between groups of children and to review large gatherings.

Thank you to parents who have organised either postal or drive through PCR tests as a matter of urgency, lots of children have been asymptomatic – not showing any symptoms or signs of being unwell but still carrying the virus.

We urge you to get your child a PCR test if they have any of the COVID symptoms. These symptoms of illness might just be a feeling of being unwell, sore throat, upset stomach, light cough or runny nose but Public Health England have said reacting to these 'soft symptoms' is key to finding the virus.

It is important to note that the school remains open and the enhanced measures we are using at present are aimed at making sure that this can happen. Thank you for your continued positive support and understanding.



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TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE



I wrote to you recently about our actions and how we can all help to stop the further spread of COVID and hopefully ensure we are all well for Christmas. We know how important time with our families and friends is especially after the difficult 2 years we have all faced.

Actions to stop the spread

1. Frequent handwashing to continue.
2. Catch it, bin it, kill it, reminders to all children.
3. All 'high touch points' will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.
4. Staff are wearing masks when in communal areas and when meeting any parents face to face.
5. Staff are taking regular LFD tests.
6. Premier Sport clubs and Multi Skills have been cancelled until the end of term.

How can you help?

1. We strongly advise that you take your child for a PCR test if they are showing **any** symptoms of Covid 19.
2. Be extra vigilant to any signs of COVID. If your child has; a new cough, a temperature or loss of smell/taste they **MUST** immediately isolate and take a PCR test.

Further Advice

The school setting remains open and your child should continue to attend if they remain well. If you think your child is a close contact, but has not have not been contacted directly by NHS Test and Trace, then they should take a PCR test via **Get a Free PCR test** to check if you have coronavirus (COVID-19) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) or by calling 119.

When ordering a PCR test it is important to check the box (online) or tell 119 'I've been told to get a test by my health protection team' and not 'I've been told to get a test by my school or nursery'.

Further guidance can be found at Welcome to GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19

Symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

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

If your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known and they are fever free (without medication) for at least 24 hours.

If negative, the child can end self-isolation and return to school once well.

If positive, the child should isolate until at least 10 days after their symptoms appeared. If the child has a positive test result, but does not have symptoms, they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for a PCR test (the normally available test type) and this can be arranged via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

Please refer to the previous letter that I sent last week for further, detailed information and guidance.

Changes to the school calendar

Due to the outbreak situation at Dunsford, it is with a heavy heart that we have taken the difficult decision that Christmas events will happen without any visitors. I know this will be disappointing as



we have all been hoping that we would be able to share these events with families this year and I recognise how much you would have been looking forward to this. However, we will do all we can to ensure that the children have a lovely Christmas time at school and provide parents with videos and photographs of the fun where possible. Our school staff have lots of plans to make this year a very special festive time for our children.

Christmas Jumper Day and Class Parties

On Friday 10th December, we will be holding Christmas Jumper Day and also class Christmas parties. On this day, the children are welcome to come into school wearing their Christmas jumpers and bring a voluntary donation of £1. In the afternoon, the children will have their class Christmas parties. During this time, the children will listen to music, take part in games and Christmas crafts. The children do not need to bring any food in for this as this will follow lunchtime. This will be a lovely time for the children to build excitement with their friends about the up-coming festive season and we are looking forward to this time. This year, in order to keep Father Christmas safe, he will not be coming to Dunsford in person, but we will have a special, personalised message from Father Christmas himself for each class.

Trips and visits are currently being discussed for the new year in the Spring Term.

I know that this can be a worrying time for many of you and want to reassure you that we are doing all we can to stop the spread of the virus and try to ensure that everyone is well for Christmas. If you have any worries or concerns please do ring the school office.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Guntrip

Mrs Guntrip
Head of Academy