

Thursday 3rd March 2022

Dear Parents,

As you will be aware, the Government announced that the legal restrictions implemented in response to COVID-19 are coming to an end.

I am therefore writing to update you on what this will mean for your child and how we can continue to help limit transmission of the virus within our school and the wider community.

The main changes are that the government has removed any legal requirements, but we still have a duty of care and legal requirement to operate within health and safety guidelines. This means that the measures and actions we currently have in place will remain and be reviewed in line with the next set of changes on 1st April.

We do have vulnerable members of staff and vulnerable pupils and it is still important that our actions minimise the spread of Covid. Just as if it was an illness such as chicken pox or measles – we would take action to minimise spread. It is this which is underpinning our actions this half term to keep our school community as safe as we can.

Regular asymptomatic testing

- The Government has removed guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing. Of course, if you have access to test kits and would like to continue testing, then we would welcome this. Until the 1st April, you can still order home kits.
- If there is an outbreak, Public Health may instruct us to return to testing and it is our understanding that tests will be provided for you to use.

Self-isolation and contact-tracing

- The Government has removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. However, if your child tests positive, you are advised to keep your child at home (and therefore not attend school) and avoid contact with other people for at least five full days. We will not be able to admit any children into school who are Covid positive. They should then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days.
- If your child has COVID 19 or we suspect that they have Covid 19 we can ask parents to keep them at home and advise they are tested. Of course, we have worked together throughout this pandemic, and we are hopeful that this action would not be applied.



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FLOURISHING FUTURES



- We need to act as this were any other infectious illness e.g. chicken pox. If your child is likely to spread an illness, we would ask that you keep them at home and we would ask that you do the same if it is Covid related. This means we minimise the spread and keep staffing levels high enough to sustain face to face learning.
- If a member of your household has Covid, we would encourage you to support us by LFT testing children (over 5 years old) who are attending school. Doing this for 7 days (whilst they are most infectious), gives us the best possible chance of keeping Covid low and our community safe.
- There will be further changes from April 1st and we will share these as soon as we have them.

A number of precautionary measures will remain, including ensuring that classrooms and communal areas have sufficient ventilation, and that there continues to be regular hygiene and cleaning processes in place.

We very much recognise and appreciate the support and cooperation that everyone has shown to the range of safety measures we have implemented over the last two years, all of which have been in line with Government and Public Health guidance. It has helped us to ensure the health and safety of your child, staff and school community, whilst limiting disruption to learning as much as possible.

Across our Trust schools we were still experiencing high levels of infection and illness as a result of Covid. This meant that due to staff shortages some schools had to move to remote learning. We want to avoid this at all costs and with your support, by maintaining these measures we can ensure we do not have to move to remote learning.

We will review the number of cases as we go through the half term and if we make changes to any procedures, we will let you know, well in advance.

As always, if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of this further, please do not hesitate to get in touch and thank you again for all your support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Stephens

Executive of Newton and Teign Hub