

Dear Parents and Carers,

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022



Happy New Year to you all and let's hope 2022 gets us closer to normality.  
**We look forward to welcoming all children back on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> January.**

As you will be aware from the news, it looks as if we are in for a difficult start to the new year regarding the virus.

From a school's perspective it is the concern that we may have significant staff absence and will then struggle to offer education for all children. The situation may change on a daily basis and we will endeavour to cover absences as much as we can. If we get to a point where we don't have enough staff to ensure children's safety then we may have to consider teaching some classes remotely. We hope that it won't come to that but ensuring that your child accesses their eSchools home learning will be an advantage if we do have to resort to remote learning. If you do not have the necessary technology (i.e. a computer per child) to access eSchools please let us know as we can loan out Chromebooks.

Staff absences will mean that we can't offer as quick or as comprehensive a service as we usually do so please be understanding of this.

Please only contact the school office if absolutely necessary as the office can be inundated with phone calls and, particularly if there are less staff in the office, this can be challenging. Remember if you are reporting an illness you can leave a message – please speak slowly and clearly giving your child's name, their class and the reason for the absence.

A lot of information can be found on our website including letters sent out to parents which contain most of the answers to your questions.

The current guidance we have from the government is the following:

**Seven-Day isolation period:**

The 10-day self-isolation period for those who record a positive PCR test result for Covid-19 has been reduced to seven days in most circumstances.

Individuals may now take rapid lateral flow tests on day six and day seven of their self-isolation period. If those test results are negative they no longer have to complete 10 full days of self-isolation.

**Isolation rules for close contacts:**

As before, those who are fully vaccinated or children aged between 5 and 18 and a half, who have been identified as a close contact of someone with Covid, should take a lateral flow test every day for seven days and, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time, they should continue to attend school as normal.

Children aged under the age of 5 should not do a daily test or self-isolate and should attend their provision unless they receive a positive PCR test result.

**The above means that if your child tests positive then they may be able to return to school after 7 days isolation if they have a negative lateral flow test on day 6 and day 7 of their isolation.**

**If your child is a close contact of someone who has tested positive for Covid then they must do a lateral flow test every day for seven days before attending school that day to ensure that they are not asymptomatic carriers of Covid-19.**

**Of course, if your child has any symptoms of Covid-19 then they must isolate and take a PCR test.** Please continue to be vigilant with regard to this as it helps to keep everyone in school safe.

We do need evidence of a positive PCR test so please forward your NHS email confirming the test result to our school email address [tanfieldlea@durhamlearning.net](mailto:tanfieldlea@durhamlearning.net) if your child does test positive at any time.

Our staff continue to take 2 lateral flow tests a week and follow all the national guidance. They will also continue to wear masks when moving around school but will not generally be wearing a mask when teaching in the classroom. Primary children are not being advised to wear masks.

Please ensure that when you are dropping off or picking up your child, you keep your distance from other parents and wear a mask if you feel safer doing so.

Lateness has started to become an issue. **Children must arrive at school between 8:40 and 8:50.** After this the gates will be locked. It really is very important that they arrive during this time. Once the gates are locked children have to come to the main entrance and not only do they get a late mark, the lower school children have to be taken over to their classroom. This is very time consuming for staff and this week we have one of our office staff off so there will be no staff available to do this.

**It's therefore crucial that children arrive to school on time every day.**

**Can I remind everyone of the one way system we have in place. All children and parents should enter the school grounds via the main entrance area next to the woods and leave via the top entrance (between the School House and the Activity Den).** Only parents with mobility issues have been allowed, following a request, to exit via the main entrance. **This helps to ensure that adults can maintain their distance from each other.**

As I said initially, let's hope that as we progress through 2022 we can begin to experience a more normal school life but it is important that we follow the guidance as we head back into school for the spring term.

Kind regards,  
Kay Hemmings  
Head Teacher

