

August 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the new school year, one which I hope will offer pupils as much normality as possible in their education after a prolonged period of disruption.

Over the break, the Government guidance for school in relation to Covid has been updated. For your information, I have set out below some of the key changes, which are broadly in line with those anticipated in my communication to you at the end of term 6. Schools across the Trust have been finalising their planning for September now that this updated guidance has been published and, if they have not already done so, will shortly be providing you with further information about what the changes mean in practical terms for you and your children.

- **Self-isolation requirements:** There have been no changes to the requirement for those that test positive for Covid to self-isolate. As I am sure you are aware however, there have been changes to the need to self-isolate if you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive and those aged under 18 or aged over 18 who are double vaccinated are not required to self-isolate unless advised to do so by NHS Test and Trace. You can find out more information about when to self-isolate and what to do via this [link](#). Unless exceptional circumstances, schools are no longer required to support with contact tracing.
- **Bubbles:** Schools are no longer expected to keep pupils in bubbles or reduce mixing in groups.
- **Music:** Singing and instrument playing can resume.
- **Face coverings:** The Government continues to recommend face coverings in crowded areas where prevalence is high or on school transport.
- **Remote Learning:** Where pupils are absent as a result of self-isolation and where they are well enough to do so, they will be provided with remote education.
- **Lateral Flow Testing:** Our secondary pupils will receive 2 on site lateral flow tests on return and will be requested to continue to test at home twice a week until at least the end of September

The Government have produced information specifically for parents which you can find via this [link](#).

All Trust schools will continue to have a Risk Assessment in place, as they have done over the past year, and these will include coverage of the four control measures set out in the guidance, namely good hygiene; appropriate cleaning regimes; keeping spaces ventilated and following Public Health advice on self-isolation and management of confirmed cases. They will also have in place 'Outbreak Management Plans' should there be a number of positive cases within the school over a short period of time.

Schools will be revisiting with all pupils the importance of what are now well practised hygiene routines and I would ask that you support them in this regard by reminding your children of the importance of:

- Hand hygiene: frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water or through the use of hand sanitiser
- Respiratory hygiene: the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

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I would also like to remind you that if your child has any of the following symptoms of Covid 19 then they should not attend school and should take a PCR test:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of or change to their sense of smell or taste

Please ensure that you report any absence to your child's school in the usual way, this includes advising them if your child is absent due to Covid symptoms or as a result of a positive test.

Whilst looking forward to the chance of a more normal year, I do recognise that for some the return to school whilst Covid remains prevalent, will be a cause for anxiety. I would urge you to speak to your child's class teacher if this is the case so that you can understand the measures that are in place and discuss any particular concerns that you may have.

Our school teams look forward to welcoming children back into school and, as always, my thanks for your support.

With kind regards,



**Emily Massey**  
CEO