



5th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have had a good break and that those of you who were poorly have made a full recovery.

With regards to the COVID situation in school and across our local authority, we are still under local guidance from the public health team as the case rate in Somerset is so high compared to the national rate (last available figures were over 1032/100 000).

This means that the following action should be taken when COVID symptoms are present OR when a PCR test has been required due to local restrictions:

- Anyone displaying COVID symptoms should seek a PCR and isolate until the results are known.
- People can be released from isolation if they produce a negative lateral flow result on day six AND on day seven of the isolation period, with tests taken at least 24 hours apart AND they do not have a high temperature.

If self-isolation ends following two negative lateral flow results, people should follow this advice:

- limit close contact with other people outside their household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces
- work from home if possible
- wear a face covering in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces and where they are in close contact with other people
- limit contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19

Follow the [guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#)

For schools, where there is a single case or multiple cases which are not in any way connected, the following advice is in place:

- all household members of positive cases should book a PCR test, do a daily lateral flow test for seven days and limit social contacts as per the above advice
- staff and pupils who are contacts of positive cases are advised to do a daily lateral flow test for seven days
- promoting social distancing and reducing crowding.

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Somerset Public Health recommend that schools gain assurance from the child or parent/carer that:

- pupils are well and symptom free
- after a positive pcr, pupils have had 2 negative LFT's, at least 24 hours apart, before returning to school
- pupils do not return before the seventh day after their symptoms started or they took a positive test, e.g., if symptoms started on Mon 1st then the earliest date of return would be Mon 8th, which is day 7

This also applies to children under 5, with lateral flow testing at parental or carer discretion.

Further action is recommended if there are connected cases or an outbreak. We will follow the guidance if these scenarios arise.

We know that this is getting ever more complicated and can foresee real challenges as we proceed into the new term. While keeping schools open for all children is our aim, the government has, in its latest letter to headteachers, acknowledged that schools may have to take a more flexible approach should staff shortages or COVID outbreaks threaten the safe opening of settings. This may include doubling up classes, remote learning or making changes to the school's timetable or curriculum offer.

With this in mind, we ask that you are extremely vigilant in looking out for signs and symptoms, and also in taking children for PCR tests promptly when you are concerned about them potentially having COVID. I'm sure that nobody wants to return to remote learning if they can help it – staff included – so we need to make sure that school is as safe an environment as it can be for everyone and that all members of our community continue to take responsibility for each other's wellbeing so that we can have a lovely spring term filled with fun and good memories.

Fingers crossed for a smoother year in 2022!

Kind regards,



Tracey Hart
Headteacher

