



21th December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

There has been a change in guidance for schools in light of the new Omicron COVID variant that impacts on all children (aged 5 or above) and families in school. The new guidance from the Department for Education states that if a child (aged 5 plus) or member of staff (or anyone in the community) is deemed by Test and Trace to be a close contact of anyone with COVID (of any variant), they should take daily lateral flow tests (LFT) for 7 days. This is to reduce unnecessary isolation.

We are following the guidance from DfE and Derby City. Close contacts of any variant, including those who are double vaccinated and children aged 5 – 18 years, should undertake a PCR test and isolate until they receive their result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days. If the PCR result is negative, they may return to school and, in addition, continue to follow the new advice to undertake daily lateral flow tests (LFTs) for 7 days following the time they were in contact with the positive case. These daily LFTs need to be done in the morning before school and the results need to be reported through the Online Reporting System and to school.

Daily testing for contacts of those with COVID-19 will help protect education settings by reducing transmission and will also help keep pupils in face-to-face education. We are very aware that many younger children find these tests uncomfortable but we do ask all parents to get their child to take a test if asked. If your child is not able/ willing to complete a PCR and LFTs when deemed a contact, please contact helpline@jph.srscmat.co.uk to discuss options with us if the need arises.

Currently these plans are in place until the end of term but if cases stay high nationally, we would fully expect them to still be place in January. We do NOT have boxes of LFTs in school. If you need LFTs, please order them [here](#). If anything changes either between now and the end of term – or in the Christmas holidays, we will be in touch with you.

As a result of the rising number of cases across the UK, the DfE has also asked all schools to relook at their contingency planning in time for January. At the present time, we have been given no further information than this. We have simply been asked to **be prepared for all eventualities**. In reality, this might mean that things remain the same, or could include such measures as a return to the 'bubble system' that was in operation last year. This is where the year groups in school separate bubbles which do not cross. If this is to be the case, we shall of course inform you of this as soon as possible after the government announcement is made or guidance is given.



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St Ralph
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As part of our contingency planning, we must also plan for periods of government/local authority directed remote learning. To do this effectively, we must be able to pinpoint our critical worker families. For this reason, we have asked you to let us know your occupation/s and whether you feel that anyone in your household qualifies as a critical worker. This information gathering exercise forms part of our contingency planning and is not because we have been told that this will definitely happen. Please use the link below to update your details if you have not done so yet.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjVPipYjoQMSjXuolvUYG6F6-vhVZrN9iYFCZg6aqfxtX8Tg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Lastly, if for any reason your child is required to work from home, they will need access to a computer device and good internet provision. If this will be an issue please do let us know using the form below.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScl_W87l+hNnxLDUsmTkDoPruDBfXDe9hWH5VoNM73FqdGe7mA/viewform?usp=sf_link

Thank you for your continued understanding and working with us to keep our whole school community as safe as possible. If you do have any questions, please email helpline@jph.srscmat.co.uk

As ever, your kind support is very much appreciated at this time.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas.

Mrs Churchill



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