



Tuesday 4th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year - we hope you all had a lovely Christmas break.

Given the high case numbers at the moment, some of you will have been affected by COVID-19 over this holiday period and we are sure there will be more cases this term.

Some of the updated government guidance is important for you to be aware of:

Changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19:

Since Wednesday 22nd December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances.

Individuals may now take Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, and individuals do not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

Asymptomatic testing and confirmatory PCR tests:

Staff will continue to take their twice weekly LFD tests to help reduce the risk of transmission. There is no Government recommendation for primary age pupils to regularly test, unless they have been identified as a contact for someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and therefore advised to take lateral flow tests for 7 days.

However, if your child has symptoms of COVID-19, or a household member has tested positive with COVID-19, they should not attend school and they should take a PCR test as soon as possible. Whilst awaiting the PCR result, individuals should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of a positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the child can return to school, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Ongoing precautions in school:

The main factors to reduce the risk of infection spreading remain ventilation and hygiene. Windows in school will be open so children are invited to wear extra layers of clothing underneath their uniform. Hand washing will continue regularly throughout the day. For your information, staff will continue to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas of the school, but not whilst teaching.

Staff absence:

It is likely that for the next couple of months, we will continue to face issues with staff absence. Our priority is to ensure school remains open and, where teachers and teaching assistants are required to isolate, we will always try our best to cover their absence. The very last resort, in the case of severe staffing issues, is that children would be required to remote learn from home.

Learning from Home:

Where a child has tested positive for COVID-19 but has very mild or no symptoms, then home learning information will be sent via Class Dojo. Where children are unwell with COVID-19 or absent as a result of any other illness, there is obviously no expectation to complete any schoolwork.

Wishing you a happy, hopeful and healthy 2022.

Best wishes,

Kate Clifford
Head Teacher
Southwold Primary School and Early Years' Centre

