12th January 2022

Advice to All Parents - warn and inform

Please note that this is the letter that we have been given by the DFE and all the advice contained comes from them. If you have been given conflicting advice or are unable to follow this (e.g. re LFD testing) please continue as you have been. We do understand that it can be difficult to get hold of tests at present.

Dear Parents,

We have been advised that there has been confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the school.

We appreciate that you may find this concerning so we are continuing to monitor the situation and are providing the following advice. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

What are we already doing?

When relevant, students and staff who have tested positive are isolating. The children who are identified as contacts of the confirmed cases will have guidance from NHS Test and Trace.

Those aged five and above will be advised to take daily LFD tests before attending school for a period of 7 days. Outbreak control measures are also in place within the school and being kept under review.

If your child is well

The school remains open. If your child remains well, they can continue to attend school as normal. We will keep this under review.

In addition to daily LFD testing for close contacts, we encourage household members aged 11 and over to continue with twice weekly LFD testing to help identify cases promptly.

If you think your child is a close contact but has not been contacted directly by NHS Test and Trace, then we would advise they undertake daily LFD tests for a period of 7 days. This advice applies to children aged 5 and over. Whilst daily testing for 7 days is your choice, it is strongly encouraged as it helps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community. (LFD tests are available via community testing sites, local pharmacies or you can order online for home delivery).

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19

If your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should get a PCR test (https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119) and remain at home at least until the result is known and they are fever free (without medication) for at least 24 hours.

- If negative, the child can end self-isolation and return to school once well;
- If positive, the child should isolate as a positive case (see below)

People who test positive for COVID-19 should self-isolate at home until they are well (48 hours fever free) and *either*:

a) 10 full days have passed, *or*
b) They have produced two negative LFD tests at least 24 hours apart, with the first taken no earlier than day 6.

Note: Lingering coughs and changes to smell/taste are *not* a sign of ongoing infectiousness, so children can return to school if they have ended their self-isolation period (see above).

If your child does not have symptoms, count the day they took the test as day 0. If they subsequently develop symptoms, they will need to restart their isolation period using the day symptoms developed as day 0.

You can seek advice on COVID-19 symptoms from the nhs.uk website. If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at https://111.nhs.uk/ or by phoning 111

Instructions for people who live in the same household as someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is symptomatic and awaiting a test result

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. If you are not legally required to self-isolate, you will be provided with advice on testing, **advised to take extra caution**, and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19.

Those who are clinically extremely vulnerable should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

You are *not* required to self-isolate if any of the following apply:

- You are fully vaccinated
- You are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- You have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- You are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Fully vaccinated means that you have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since you received the recommended doses of that vaccine (note this is currently under review and may be updated to include a booster dose in due course).

In line with national guidance for households with Covid-19 infection, household and other close contacts of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 should undertake **daily LFD testing for**

a period of 7 days or for 10 days from their last contact with the positive case (whichever is first). This is recommended for all close contacts aged 5 and over who are not required to isolate. (LFD tests are available via community testing sites, local pharmacies or you can order online for home delivery).

You are required to self-isolate if you're aged over 18 years and 6 months and if any of the following apply**:**

- You have received only one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine
- You have not received any dose of the COVID-19 vaccination
- You are not otherwise exempt

Household members who need to self-isolate as close contacts should not go to work, school or public areas, and exercise should be taken within the home. You should ask friends or family if you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online. Please read the stay at home guidance which provides information on this.

Household members staying at home for 10 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

You could be fined if you do not self-isolate following a notification by NHS Test and Trace. You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate, or you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate.

How to reduce spread of COVID-19 as a household contact who is not required to self-isolate

Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be infected with COVID-19 and pass it on to others. If you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 but you are not required to self-isolate, you can help protect others by following the guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your community:

- Test daily using LFDs
- Limit close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces (when not in school)
- Wear a face covering for those aged 11 and over in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilates spaces and when you 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 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

You should follow this advice for at least 10 days.

If you are a health or social care worker or student undertaking a work placement who has been identified as a household contact and are exempt from self-isolation, there is additional guidance available that you should follow to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in these settings.

If you develop symptoms at any time, even if these are mild, self-isolate immediately, arrange to have a COVID-19 PCR test and follow the guidance for people with COVID-19 symptoms.

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- Get vaccinated – everyone aged 12 and over can book COVID-19 vaccination appointments now
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- Open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- Wear a face covering if aged 11 and over when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- Participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results

Further Information

Further information is available at https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Yours sincerely

Lucy Macey and Clare Yates, on the request of the DFE (UK Health Security Agency).