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28th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID Update

I am writing to you in light of the government's announcement about the country moving to the "Living with COVID 19" plan last week. Please find below some information about what this plan means for schools. Most of this information is taken directly from the DfE website but if anyone would like further clarification then please get in touch.

Last Monday the Prime Minister set out the next phase of the government's COVID-19 response '[Living with COVID-19](#)'. COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education remains.

From Monday 21 February, the Government has removed the guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing.

From Thursday 24 February, the Government has removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days, and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days. In addition, the Government will:

- No longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for 7 days, and remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate.*
- End routine contact tracing. Contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests. Staff, children and young people should attend their education settings as usual. This includes staff who have been in close contact within their household, unless they are able to work from home.*

From Friday 1 April, the Government will:

- Update guidance setting out the ongoing steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with other people. This will align with the changes to testing.*



- *No longer provide free to order universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for the general public in England.*

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age. It continues to be a priority to ensure that as many children as possible are regularly attending school.

The position on recording school attendance in the register has not changed. Where a pupil is following advice to self-isolate prior to a confirmed case of COVID-19 they will be recorded as code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus). Where a pupil has a confirmed case of COVID-19 they will be recorded as code I (illness).

Though there is no legal duty to isolate, we have been advised that any child who has symptoms of COVID should be advised to take a PCR test. PCR tests will remain free of charge until 1st April.

If a child does complete a lateral flow test and it is positive, the advice about isolating for at least 5 days (rather than getting a PCR test) remains in place.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Hannah Freeman
Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead

