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### **Updated Covid Guidance: February 2022**

As we return to school after the half-term break, I want to provide you with the latest advice and guidance for schools following the Government's publication of their "Living with Covid" plan on 21st February.

#### **What happens if a child or staff member tests positive for Covid?**

**The advice continues to be stay at home and avoid contact with other people** for those with symptoms or who test positive for Covid-19. The difference is that the legal requirement has been removed.

The national Public Health advice is that anyone who has tested positive for Covid-19 should self-isolate at home for at least 5 full days. If the person tests negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both days 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature, they can end isolation and return to school.

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a child with the key symptoms or Covid-19 should not attend school given the potential risk to others. If you insist on your child attending school where they have a confirmed or suspected case of Covid-19, I can, under the guidance, take the decision to refuse them if, in my reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect others from possible infection with Covid-19. Hopefully this will not be necessary.

There is no requirement for close contacts and household contacts of cases to self isolate or complete 7 days of LFD testing and this includes unvaccinated adults.

#### **What happens if my child has Covid symptoms?**

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child has any of these symptoms, you should book a PCR test. Your child is advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people while you are waiting for the test result.

#### **Face Coverings**

The Government and Local Public Health Team continues to advise a cautious approach and although they are no longer recommended, I will continue to support staff who wish to voluntarily wear face coverings in school.

#### **What if there is an outbreak in school?**

As before, we do have contingency plans which we will put in place should the number of positive cases within school increase or we have high absence levels. This may include the reintroduction of face coverings and restricting contact between classes.

As always, thank you for your support.

R. Cook