

Dear Parents,

As you are aware, COVID-19 infection rates are high in our local community; the omicron variant is spreading rapidly and we have a high number of families affected. We are keen to minimise the risks of infection in school whilst continuing to provide a high-quality education for our children and it is extremely important that we all take steps to reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection, especially during the next few weeks. In light of this, could we please request that you let school know if your child has had Covid 19 during the Christmas break (unless you have already done so).

### **1. Suspected Illness**

Please do not send your child into school if you suspect they are ill. Please complete a Lateral Flow Test or arrange a PCR test as soon as possible for them. They can return to school if this result is negative at any time of the day.

We will also be extremely cautious regarding illness in school over the next few weeks in our measures to keep everyone safe and will send suspected cases home immediately. Please ensure all contact details are up to date; if you have changed your telephone number, please contact the school office.

### **2. Face Masks**

Please wear a face covering when attending the school playground at the start and end of the day and maintain social distancing with others where possible.

### **3. Visitors into school**

External visitors into school will be kept to a minimum with only external agencies providing direct support to children being permitted on a regular basis. In addition, all visitors will be asked to take a LFT test before coming into school.

All parent meetings will take place using TEAMS, ZOOM or by telephone.

### **4. Staff testing and potential absence**

All staff will complete lateral flow testing at least twice weekly. We are anticipating some staff absence due to COVID which may cause some disruption, but we will try to minimise the effects of this as much as possible.

### **5. Key Stage Bubbles**

We will continue to operate Key Stage bubbles in school with minimised contacts with others. There will be no large school or mixed gatherings for the next few weeks. All other school activities will take place as planned.

Thank you to all parents who have contacted school via email to update us on your circumstances. I appreciate that the advice is sometimes difficult to understand and I have tried to make it as clear as possible within the school context here. This is in line with COVID 19 Updated isolation advice issued to schools from DfE on 2.1.22.

What should I do if I suspect someone has COVID 19?

- If you or your child has COVID-19 symptoms you should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. You should arrange to have a PCR test as soon as possible. If this PCR test result is positive, you must continue to self-isolate. Close contacts are also advised to complete a PCR test.

### What should I do if I have a positive Lateral Flow Test?

- If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, but have a positive lateral flow test you should arrange for a PCR test as soon as possible. Please keep your child at home until the result is received. If you have a positive PCR test result, you must stay at home and follow the self-isolation guidance.

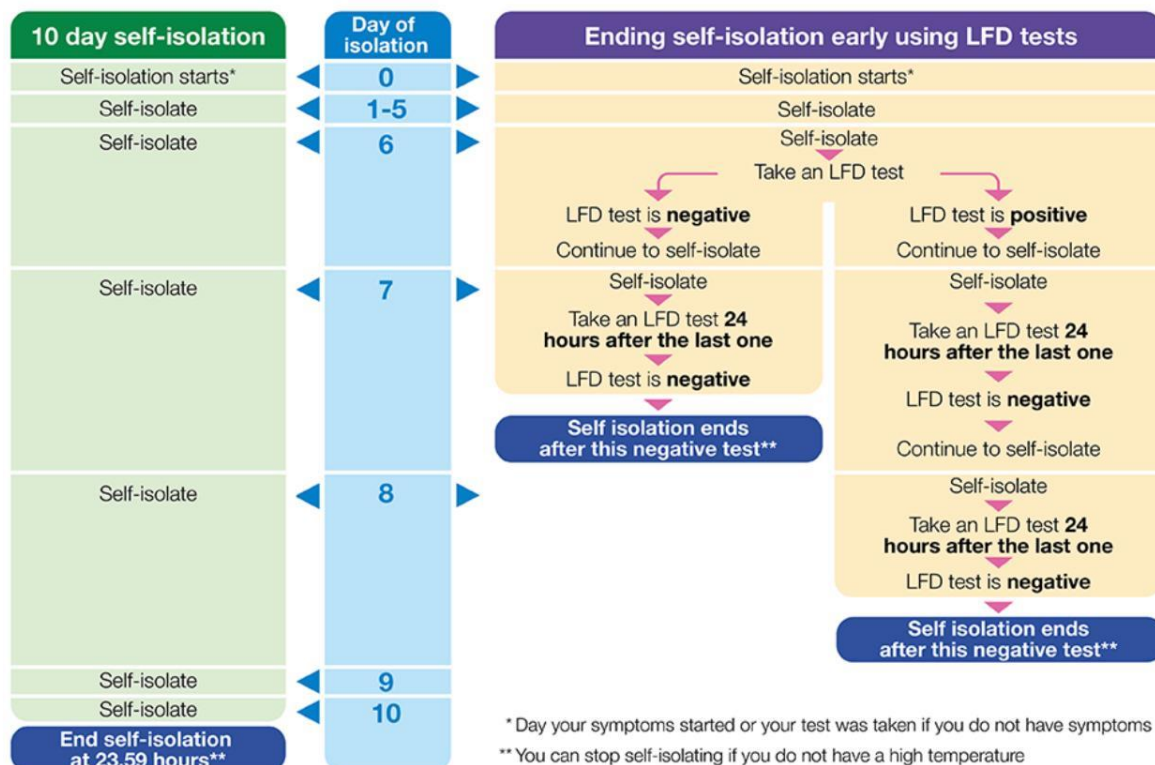
### What is the current self-isolation period for children and adults who test positive for COVID-19?

- Since Wednesday 22 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, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take 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. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If you choose to test your child and both test results are negative and your child does not have a high temperature, they may end 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.

Hopefully this chart below will help too:



What if my child is a close contact of someone infected with COVID-19?

Anyone living in the same household as someone with COVID-19 is at a significantly higher risk of becoming infected. If, as parents, you or someone else in the home is testing as positive and your child displays no symptoms or has tested negative, you should follow the steps below.

Reception to Year 6 children

Children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, **should take an LFD test every day for seven days and may continue to attend school as normal if the tests are negative.**

If your child has a positive test on a LFT or develops COVID 19 symptoms at any time they must arrange to take a PCR test to confirm this. However, from the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022, if a child tests positive on a LFT, it will no longer be a requirement to take a PCR test to confirm COVID-19.

If you cannot arrange for someone to bring and collect your child to school for you, please contact the school office and we will arrange for home learning tasks to be set on Seesaw by class teachers. These absences will be authorised until the adult period of isolation ends. If you require any technology such as an iPad, could you please inform the school office as we have a number of Ipads available for loan.

#### **Nursery children**

Children under 5 are **not** being advised to take part in daily testing if they are a close contact, unless parents wish them to do so. If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and do not need to start daily testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19, and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible if they begin to display symptoms. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result. If the test is positive, they should follow the stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

Guidance is continuously changing, so if you have any queries, please contact school and we will attempt to answer these to the best of our ability.