

Tuesday 14th December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re. DfE Covid Update - Management of Confirmed Cases

There have been some changes to testing procedures for close contacts in schools that I wanted to share with you. From today, Tuesday 14th December, people who are fully vaccinated and identified as a contact of someone with Covid-19 (whether Omicron or not) should take an NHS lateral flow test every day for 7 days to help slow the spread of Covid-19. This new guidance aims to reduce pressures on people's everyday lives by replacing the requirement for Omicron contacts to isolate for 10 days, while protecting the public by identifying asymptomatic cases and stopping the chains of transmission.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible school staff and students should take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the Online Reporting System and to their school setting. If they test negative, they can continue to attend their education setting. Outside of the education setting, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the Sunday 12th December press release. This approach should also be adopted over the winter break and on return to school in January.

As now, where a lateral flow test comes back positive, or where Covid-19 symptoms develop, there is the need to self-isolate and take a confirmatory PCR test to verify the result. If the PCR result comes back positive, the requirement is to self-isolate for 10 days from the day that the positive lateral flow test was taken, or the day that symptoms developed. Lateral flow tests do not need to be taken during that 10-day isolation period. If the PCR result comes back negative, there is no need for self-isolation but lateral flow tests should be taken for the remainder of the 7 days.

Anyone identified as a contact with a negative lateral flow result is strongly advised to limit close contact with other people outside their household, especially in crowded or enclosed spaces. They should also limit contact with anyone who is more vulnerable. They should also follow government guidance on wearing a face covering and working from home where possible.

Unvaccinated adults are not eligible for this new daily testing policy, they must self-isolate for 10 days if they are a contact of someone who tests positive for Covid-19 (Omicron or not), unless eligible for an existing workplace daily contact testing. People will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace by phone, email or text or they will receive a notification

from the NHS Covid-19 app to tell them they are a contact of someone who tested positive and what action they need to take.

Daily lateral flow testing applies to all contacts who are:

- fully vaccinated adults – people who have had 2 jabs;
- all children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccination status;
- people who can prove they are unable to be vaccinated for clinical reasons;
- people taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a Covid-19 vaccine;
- under 5s are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily rapid lateral flow testing.

I hope this explanation of new guidelines helps parents/carers in the event that your child is identified as a close contact.

With my best wishes.



Jodie Hassan
Headteacher