



2nd January 2022

Dear Parent

I hope you enjoyed the Christmas break and I wish you and your family a very happy and safe New Year. We seem to be starting 2022 more positively than 2021 but there are mixed reports about the impact of Omicron and are still encouraging us to be cautious.

The Department for Education updated their guidance to schools on 2nd January. The headlines mostly relate to secondary schools but the government have also reminded us that face-to-face education remains a priority in all settings. However, there is also an acknowledgement that staff absences may be higher over the next few weeks and remote learning may be required for some groups. We will do our best to maintain face-to-face learning but I am sure you understand we will have to remain flexible in our approach, depending on the severity of infections over the coming weeks.

The guidance for parents can be found here:

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

However, at the time of writing this letter, it has not been updated to reflect the very latest regulations.

The general guidance for schools, aimed at school leaders in particular, can be found here:

[Schools COVID-19 operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/schools-covid-19-operational-guidance)

This is up to date.

I will just emphasise a few of the changes and requirements here:

- The government now recommend secondary school pupils should wear face coverings in classrooms, which is additional to the previous recommendation that they should be worn when moving around school.
- Secondary school pupils should continue to test twice per week, with a gap of 3 to 4 days between tests.
- Secondary pupils should take a LFD test before returning to school.
- Close contacts of infected people should take a LFD test every day for seven days after contact.
- The isolation period for infected people has been reduced to seven days – provided they can produce a negative LFD test on days 6 and 7.



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We will be conducting lateral flow tests in our secondary schools this week. Please also remind your child to take a test on Monday 3rd January.

As always, the guidance can change quickly and you may find it helpful to return to the government websites from time to time for the latest information. There is also a lot more guidance about other topics, such as vaccinations for vulnerable 5 to 11-year-olds, which you may wish to read about.

I very much hope we can minimise any disruption to learning over the coming weeks. Everybody across the trust is determined to keep offering our pupils the fullest education possible and minimise any further disruption. Please keep an eye out for further communication from your child's school and do not hesitate to get in touch with your usual contacts if you have specific questions.

Your sincerely



John McNally
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