

Welcome back all – I trust you had a restful and enjoyable time without the routines and pressures of the school term.

We are looking forwards to seeing the children again tomorrow after their break. It has been confirmed by the DFE, that while we may have a rocky road ahead, with many more current COVID cases in the area than we had this time last year when the government chose to close schools, we are open as usual from tomorrow and it will be teaching and learning as usual.

We will await news of those children who currently have COVID tomorrow before deciding whether or not, any year group needs to be ring fenced, but hope the holiday has acted as a circuit break and that we will begin the term with less cases than we had before Christmas.

It has been confirmed that Omicron is now the dominant variant in the area. It is worth noting therefore that Omicron, while still requiring thought to the usual three symptoms of COVID, is not so likely to result in loss of smell and symptoms are similar to flu.

The only change to our risk assessments this term are the following:

Clarification on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals 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 both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 7.

The decision to return on day 8 following two negative LFTs on days 6 and 7, is optional and otherwise children will need to remain isolated for the ten days. (Please refer to the attached flow charts and letter from the Local Authority).

Please be understanding of the fact that we may also get a number of staff catching Omicron and supply teachers are very hard to find presently. There may be times where we have to open dividing doors and work across year groups with remaining staff. We will do all we can to continue to provide a high quality learning experience and to cover classes where

we can. Where children are self isolating but not ill, there will be work on the website to access and teachers will be in touch with you where your child may need any adapted provision.

We may also have a shortage of kitchen staff at times thus you need to be aware that, like these next few days, the menu on offer is not the same as that on the printed menus. Where we have a shortage of cooks, they will be serving easier meals such as jacket potatoes and pasta. All dietary requirements will still of course be met.

Please can parents continue to wear face masks while on the school site. Any visitors to the school will be asked to take an LFT test on the day.

Lastly a reminder that with the incoming cold weather children will need hats, gloves, scarves, raincoats and a change of shoes, if they wish to do sport with Mr Mackender on the school field at lunchtime. Please ensure all items are named.

Best wishes,

Liz Bassett