23rd February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, the COVID restrictions are changing this week and therefore, we would like to update you as to what this means for your child.

Since Monday, we have been waiting for some clearer guidance as to exactly how to deal with cases and suspected cases, but unfortunately, the DFE guidance is ambiguous and therefore, this is our understanding at this point – this may well change in the coming days.

**Self-Isolation for confirmed or suspected COVID-19**

Whilst the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test has been removed, those testing positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days, and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days.

Moreover, the DFE guidance states that ‘If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school where they have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.’

Taking these two statements together, we feel that there would be no change at this point: those with COVID-19 will be asked to stay at home and learn from home, when fit to do so, for 5+ days and those with symptoms or COVID in the home, will be asked to obtain a PCR to confirm a positive or negative result.

This will almost certainly change after the Easter break, when free testing is no longer available.

**Online Learning**

Live Links will continue at this point, but will probably stop when the legal requirement to do so ends with the expiry of the 2020 Coronavirus Act on March 25th. Therefore, the school will continue to send live links for the next two weeks. At this point, the school will begin to transition across to Oak Academy Resources – an online bank of lessons set up to support schools during the pandemic. The school has resisted using these as far as they do not enable the child to keep up with the current learning in the class; however, we will select some revision topics that will still benefit them over a short-period of time. This decision has been taken as the ‘live links’ impacts the smooth running of the class greatly and is not something that can continue indefinitely.

**Class/Group Bubbles**

The school has begun mixing the pupils slightly more where this is seen as beneficial:

Phase children will mix more on the playground especially Year 1 and 2; some separation will remain for KS2 children as it seems to promote better play.

There will be a lower school assembly (Reception to Year 2) and an upper school assembly (Year 3-6) in the junior hall.

Within extended care, the tables will be returned to year group tables as we feel that this provides the best balance between social distancing and social development.

All KS1 classes are now eating in the junior hall.

However, generally the pupils will still be kept in their class groups most of the time. There will however, be more ability to move children’s seating in the class or move them to a parallel class if they are struggling to learn within their own. There will also be more freedom within the class in terms of group work.

**Classes with known cases**

Throughout this term, there have been cases in almost every class and therefore, for logistical reasons, the school will only send a text informing you of multiple cases, recommending that LFT tests be used as a precaution (if available). Where there is an outbreak within a class, the school’s Outbreak Contingency Plan will still be used to add social distancing measures back.

**Masks**

At this point, staff will be asked to wear masks in communal areas and visitors will be asked to wear these in the school building.

**School Gates, Entry and Exit**

We are aware that there is no real COVID reason for keeping the staggered times and specified entry/exits; however, this does seem to help with parking and general movement around the school at peak times, and all are very clear on the routines. Therefore, this will stay in place at the moment for these reasons.

Within the summer term, we would look to complete a more comprehensive consultation with parents about the issue and see what works best for everybody.

Regards

James Grimsby

Principal