

28th February 2022

Dear parents and carers,

Last week the Prime Minister announced the 'Living with COVID-19' plan. Part of this plan included changes in the way that schools manage COVID-19 and its associated risks. There are some key changes that I would like to make you aware of.

Testing

From Monday 21 February, the Government has removed the guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing. This includes Fitzharrys School.

We will continue to receive testing kits if needed, however this will be to respond to local public health advice, particularly in relation to outbreaks. Staff and students are now able to access test kits from their local pharmacy or [online](#). They will no longer be distributed through school.

Anyone with symptoms should take a PCR test, stay at home, and follow government guidance if positive. Staff and pupils who test positive should use any test kits they already have at home to undertake testing on days five and six, before returning to school or college if they test negative. If you have run out of test kits, you should order additional kits online as outlined above.

If your son/daughter has a positive COVID-19 test, please contact the school through the absence line which is 01235 538243. You no longer need to use the COVID-19 email account.

Self-isolation and daily testing

From Thursday 24 February, the Government removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. However, children and young people with COVID-19 should not attend their education setting while they are infectious. They should take an LFD test from five days after their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another one the next day. If both these test results are negative, they should return to school, as long as they feel well enough to do so and do not have a temperature.

Please note that if a parent or carer insists on a pupil with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 attending school, we can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with Covid-19. With GCSE and A level exams coming up, and the risk of year groups working from home in the event of staff absence, this is something we will do if required.



Fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 will no longer be required to test daily for 7 days. Close contacts who are not fully vaccinated will no longer be asked to self-isolate. There is also an end to routine contact tracing. Contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests. The guidance states that in this circumstance staff, children, and young people should attend their education settings as usual.

Moving forward

We will continue to carefully reduce the risk of COVID-19 in line with the government guidance. We expect more details to be released in the coming days, in the meantime we will continue to ventilate, allow members of the school community to wear face coverings if they wish to, and take other precautions as required.

We hope that we are coming towards the end of having to take such measures in school. Yet we know that many members of our community have increased vulnerability themselves or have members of their family who would be at greater risk if they contracted COVID-19. Therefore, we will read the guidance carefully and do our best to reduce risk where possible. We will also continue communicating any changes to our approach as they are implemented.

Yours sincerely,



Will Speke
Head of School



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