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COVID URGENT Whole School Update

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are currently experiencing a significant increase in community and school transmission and confirmation of positive COVID cases. We currently have a couple of classes with high numbers and a large number of staff isolating at home. We are really struggling with staff absence and cover at the moment so I am asking again for your patience and understanding whilst those of us who remain in school are covering many different roles and juggling the challenges at this time.

I have attached a full letter with all the most up to date information and guidance that you may need. We have made some changes to our current risk assessment and contingency plan in response to the rising cases in accordance with advice and guidance from Public Health on how best to manage this situation.

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions-

Q: Can my child come to school with a cough and cold?

A: *If your child has any one of the three COVID symptoms- High Temperature, New and Persistent Cough and Loss of Taste/Smell they should have a PCR Test- NOT an LFT. If your child has a cold and is well enough they should continue to attend school. If you are not sure, please call us.*

Q: Do they come back to school on Day 5?

A: *The guidance changed on Monday 17th January but is misleading. The minimum isolation is 5 days. You can test on Day 5 and then 24 hours later. If both tests are negative they can return the next day, Day 7.*

Q: My child has a headache and a negative lateral flow, should I book a PCR test?

A: *A headache is not a COVID symptom. If your child is unwell please monitor them as many children experience a range of symptoms. Just continue to do LFTs and continue coming to school if well enough.*

Q: Can I keep my child at home if I test positive as I don't have anyone to bring them in?

A: *Your child should continue to attend school, even if you have positive cases in your household. It is strongly advised that you complete daily LFTs for everyone in your household for 10 days.*

Q: Their brother is positive can I keep all my children at home?

A: *Your child's absence will not be authorised as they are not required to isolate.*

Q: Can you send some work home or set up Remote Learning?

A: *If your child has tested positive but is well enough to access some learning and complete daily work, their class teacher will be in touch to provide what you need, give feedback and support. We cannot provide work for children who are required to be in school.*

Q: Will my child's class or school close?

A: *We are committed to keeping school and all classes open. In extreme cases of staff shortages, we may have to put some groups together for face to face learning or set some short term home learning. School will always remain open for key worker children and vulnerable pupils.*

Attendance in School

Children have missed a significant amount of schooling- affecting both their level of education and social opportunities. **A reminder that your children should be in school, every day and on time.** There is a direct link between poor attendance and those children who struggle in school, both academically and socially. We want all of our children to be happy and succeed in school and set good routines for the future. I hope that you all fully support us with this and build good habits in avoiding absence and lateness.

We are taking a firm stance on poor attendance in school and will be working with Wirral LA Attendance Team to look at fining and the possibility of prosecuting families who persistently keep their children off school. It is a legal requirement that your children are in school, keeping them off unnecessarily is not only breaking the law but also neglecting to meet your child's needs. We will also be reviewing all cases with Wirral Vulnerable Pupil Panel and may also look at the involvement of other services and the possibility that you may met the threshold for educational neglect. If your child is absent from school, we should not have to chase you for a reason. If we do not hear from you, we will complete a home visit. Children missing from education is a significant safeguarding concern, especially if we cannot get in touch with you to ensure the safety of your child. You must call the school office before 9am to inform us of your child's absence and reason for being off school. Failure to inform us could result in an unauthorised absence and possible fine or referral to external support agencies. No holidays or leave of absences will be authorised at this time.

You will receive a letter in the coming weeks to let you know if your child's attendance is a concern and you may be invited into school to discuss this. We also have a large number of 100% attendance and many who have drastically improved their attendance. We thank those who have continued to send their child in everyday, on time and understand that your commitment to good school attendance needs to be celebrated.

Wearing of Masks/Face Coverings

Please can I remind all parents and carers that masks **MUST** be worn at the school gates. If you do not have a face covering, we ask that you remain off site and do not approach our staff.

We have a large number of positive cases in our community at the moment and I will do all that I can to protect our staff and ensure that school is still able to remain open.

Many thanks for your cooperation.

Risk Assessment & Contingency Plans

We are doing all that we can in school to prevent any risk from transmission and infection. We continue to have excellent ventilation across school, high standards and additional cleaning and infection control measures such as not sharing equipment, staying in class 'bubbles' handwashing, reducing contact. All staff are vaccinated and testing regularly. We will do everything we can to minimise disruption and ensure that school remains open. We are struggling with staff absence currently and if this continues or becomes more challenging, we may have to have alternative plans in place but will avoid closing classes or school wherever possible. School will always remain open for key worker and vulnerable children and we will always do our best to ensure that every child has face to face teaching in their own class.

We continue to struggle in these challenging times. Emotions are high and we understand that many families are fed up with the restrictions and inconvenience but we are simply doing all that we can to ensure that school remains open and that your child is not effected by any further disruption. I am also asking that you remain patient with us as we continue to operate with fewer members of staff and in incredibly stressful circumstances. Please note that any verbal abuse or confrontational behaviour will not be tolerated. As adults, our children look to us to be their role models, it is always expected that you are polite, calm and respectful.

Kind regards,

Mrs Morris