

COVID-19: MEASURES AND PROTOCOLS UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers

Now that we have completed the second full week of term, this is a good time to reflect upon the measures which we have implemented to mitigate the risk which Covid-19 presents to our school community. Thank you for supporting our efforts and adhering to the guidance we shared with you.

School reopening risk assessment: This was published to the school website in the last week of July. It will be moved to the Covid-19 page of the school website; this page is found within the 'Information' tab and was created this week. All further Covid-19 related information will be added to the Covid-19 page in the weeks and months ahead with alerts published to the 'Newsflash' section on the home page of the website as and when necessary.

Mobile Covid-19 Testing Units: the school periodically receives notification of mobile Covid-19 testing units in the Borough of Barnet. This information has been sent to you by email but from now on, such notifications will also be published to the school website on the Home Page in the 'Newsflash' section and on the Covid-19 page.

Home Testing Kits: The school possesses a small quantity of home testing kits which can be issued to parents in exceptional circumstances. Responsibility for testing remains with you but the kits may be provided on request if you are unable to attend a local testing centre or unable to access a test despite your best efforts to do so during the first 48-72 hours after the presentation of Covid-19 symptoms. These kits are not in plentiful supply so do not request from the school in the first instance but only when attempts to locate a test slot have been exhausted.

Covid-19 Symptoms:

The symptoms that have been specified by Public Health and the NHS as distinguishing Covid-19 have not changed; these are a high temperature*, continuous or frequent cough, loss of taste or smell. **When any of these symptoms are present, you cannot send your child to school; please get a test, self-isolate and await the outcome of the test.** Please inform the school of your child's symptoms and the results of a test as soon as it arrives.

***A high temperature:** Please note that the NHS advise that, 'in terms of COVID symptoms, a high temperature means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not necessarily need to measure your temperature). Therefore, if a child or young person meets this criterion, they will need to self-isolate. Where the child does not have an obviously high temperature but feels unwell, or their temperature is taken for some other reason, a temperature of over 37.8°C should be considered a high temperature.'

Of course it not easy to identify Covid-19, especially in children, given that children in particular are frequently asymptomatic. The situation is further complicated by the fact that many other symptoms are also present alongside Covid-19. Many of these symptoms can be associated with conditions such as the common cold – runny nose, congestion, etc. Others such as fatigue, aching muscles, headache, vomiting and diarrhoea are also frequently reported with Covid-19. At the moment however the scientific and statistical evidence is not strong enough to inform a change to national criteria for the identification of Covid-19, without a test; this may of course change in the weeks or months ahead. If in doubt, please contact NHS 111 for advice and/or ring the school to speak to myself, deputy head Ms. Dobie or Mrs. Pacey our school welfare officer.

Attached to this letter is a helpful 'what to do if...!' document which addresses many of the scenarios you may face in relation to Covid-19. Produced by PHE and published by the BBC, I hope you will find it helpful when making decisions about what to do!

Coronavirus in children

Symptoms of coronavirus in children

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

.... a high temperature

.... a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours

.... a loss or change to sense of smell or taste; this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

What to do if your child has symptoms

If your child has any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

.... Get a test to check if they have coronavirus as soon as possible.

.... Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get the test result – only leave your home to have a test.

.... Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get the result.

Graham Gunn

Head Teacher

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