



Dear all,

We hope that you are looking forward to the holidays and that you can enjoy some well-deserved down time over the Christmas break. I am writing today to give an update on some changes to the guidance for schools regarding coronavirus and arrangements for the start of term in January 2022.

Term will end on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December at 13:00. We have already re-arranged the transport for the pupils in the Primary provision to accommodate the change in finish time; for Secondary aged pupils we will run our usual minibus service, to Halifax town centre only, at the end of the day. Those pupils currently on an after-school timetable will not be expected in on Friday.

It was a relief to hear in this week's meeting with Public Health that rates of confirmed cases of coronavirus are falling across school settings; however, this was given with the warning that because of the Omicron variant we don't know if this could be the calm before another COVID storm. The main concern with the Omicron variant is the increased transmissibility of this variant.

With this in mind, we have been issued with new guidance if someone comes into contact with COVID-19.

If your child has come into contact with someone with COVID-19, Public Health recommend the following:

- Children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for seven days.
- Children under 5 years old do not need to take part in daily testing for contacts of COVID-19 and do not need to isolate.

You can obtain LFD kits from pharmacies or online at [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

**Please immediately inform the school if your child tests positive on either a LFD or PCR test.**

There are some things you can do to keep your family and others as safe as possible:

**If you have been in contact with someone with COVID-19**

- Limit close contact with other people outside the household, especially in enclosed spaces
- Limit contact with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable



- Wear a face covering in enclosed spaces and where you are unable to maintain social distancing if you are eleven or over
- Take part in regular LFD testing if aged eleven or over
- Stay away from people who are clinically vulnerable as much as possible

Remember that vaccination reduces, but does not eliminate, the risk of acquiring and transmitting infection.

### **If anyone in your household develops COVID-19 symptoms**

The three main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- New continuous cough,
- High temperature,
- Loss of or change in normal sense of taste or smell.

Anyone with any of these symptoms should stay at home and arrange a PCR test even if they have had a negative LFD result.

If the test result is positive, the person must self-isolate for ten days.

### **Start of term arrangements**

All secondary age students at The Whitley AP Academy will be offered a seven-day LFD testing kit and we ask that they continue with twice weekly testing throughout the Christmas break.

Please can you encourage your children to test on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022 and report any positive results to school by email to [admin@twapa.co.uk](mailto:admin@twapa.co.uk)

We have been directed by the Department for Education to complete one on-site test at the start of term. To enable us to do this as safely as possible, we will be staggering the return times for secondary aged pupils:

Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	09:00	KS2 and KS4
	11:00	KS3

Provided students return a negative result on their COVID test, they will stay in school and follow their timetable as normal.

If a student tests positive, we will ask that you come and collect them and arrange for a PCR test and they will be able to follow their timetable remotely. If the PCR test comes back negative, they can return to school.



**Face masks continue to be compulsory on public transport and on our school minibus, so we ask that, if possible, you provide pupils with two face masks.**

Currently, the wearing of face masks in the school is optional for both staff and pupils, unless the guidance from the Department for Education changes, we will continue to operate on this basis. It is possible that the guidance may change before the start of term, and I will endeavor to keep you updated of any significant changes.

Thank you all for your continued support through this term and I am pleased that we've managed to get through at least one term without too much disruption.

I hope you all have a relaxing and COVID-free festive break and I wish you all a happy and healthy New Year.

Take care and stay safe.

Phillip Hannah  
Headteacher