



Thursday 9th December 2021

DfE Update for Schools in Light of Plan B Announcement

Dear Parents, Staff and Governors,

Below is the information pertinent to our school from the DfE Coronavirus Update for education settings: On Wednesday 8 December, the Prime Minister announced the implementation of [Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan](#), to reduce pressure on the NHS. Plan B sets out a number of additional measures across society to control transmission of COVID-19.

Government will prioritise keeping all education and childcare settings open. The measures set out below will support this.

Attendance

School attendance remains mandatory and all the usual rules continue to apply.

Face coverings

Face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in communal areas, unless exempt. This is a temporary measure.

We do not recommend that pupils and staff wear face coverings in classrooms, unless their Director of Public Health advises them to temporarily do so.

Wrap around provision

Schools and early years settings should continue to offer their usual before and after-school activities, including wraparound childcare. These activities provide valuable childcare for working parents and carers and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Working from home

Anyone who cannot work from home should continue to go into work.

We expect all education and childcare settings to continue to provide face-to-face teaching, and staff should continue to attend their place of work if required in order to deliver this.

Teaching and learning should not be moved online as a result of the work from home guidance.

Therapists and wider children's service professionals should continue to be invited into education and childcare settings.

Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk are not being advised to shield again.

Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend their setting and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

Testing

We strongly encourage all those involved in education and childcare settings to continue regular testing (LFD not PCR) and reporting their results.

Settings are strongly encouraged to ask parents, guardians and other visitors to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before entering the setting.

Isolation

All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will continue to be required to self-isolate and asked to book a PCR test.

The Government plans to introduce Daily Contact Testing as soon as possible as an alternative to self-isolation for contacts of positive Omicron cases who are fully vaccinated or under the age of 18 years and 6 months.

January return

We continue to learn more about the impacts of the Omicron variant. To prepare for any possible changes in public health advice, all education and childcare settings should now revisit their existing outbreak plans to ensure they are well prepared for any future changes and ensure they are familiar with the Contingency Framework Guidance.

For those in settings closing over Christmas, all staff should test over the holidays in line with national guidance. This means that they should test if they will be in a high-risk situation that day and before visiting people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19.

Inspection

Early years settings, schools and colleges will be using the final days of term to put in place these measures and consider contingency measures for January. In order to do that contingency planning, the Secretary of State for Education and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector have agreed that early years settings, schools and colleges will not be inspected next week unless there are safeguarding concerns.

What does this mean for us?

The arrangements and measures that are currently in place and were communicated earlier this week still stand.

Should there be any further changes either before the end of term or prior to returning in January, I will of course, be in touch again.

Just to remind everyone, the key points for us all are:

- Adults should take lateral flow tests regularly. I ask that if any parents, governors or visitors are coming into school, that you take a lateral flow test that morning.
- All adults are to wear masks in the building; staff are not required to wear masks in their own classroom.
- If you are exempt from wearing a face mask, please wear your exemption lanyard.
- Sanitise your hands when entering the school building.

Remember that lateral flow tests are used to identify asymptomatic cases; if a person has COVID symptoms, they must get a PCR test.

As always, thank you for your cooperation and support. If you do have any questions or concerns, please do get in touch with me.

Best wishes,



Jamie Pardon
Headteacher