

18th April 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

We look forward to the new term ahead and hope that all families had a positive and safe break. Ramadan Mubarak to all our Muslim families. **We look forward to seeing everyone back on Wednesday 20th April for the first day of term.**

As we enter the start of the new term, we are also entering a new phase of the Covid pandemic. Over the last two years pupil (and staff) attendance has been impacted by Covid and this has led to inconsistency and missed learning. The next stage is to learn to live with Covid, and to make sure the learning that has been missed is caught up on.

We therefore wanted to write to update you about the updated Covid measures and our expectations around attendance for the remainder of the school year. We want all pupils to have the highest possible attendance. We hope the new guidance will support this.

The population now has much stronger protection against Covid than at any other point in the pandemic. This means we can begin to manage the virus like other respiratory infections, thanks to the success of the vaccination programme, alongside natural immunity and increased scientific and public understanding about how to manage risk.

From 1st April the [government guidance](#) is as follows:

Asymptomatic testing	regular asymptomatic testing is no longer recommended in school settings.
	<i>This means that we no longer have access to LFD tests in school or to give out to families. We will no longer be recommending that pupils and staff test regularly</i>
PCR testing	children and adults are not expected to get a PCR test if they have Covid symptoms
People who are unwell	people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They should go back to school or work when they no longer have a high temperature, and they feel well enough to attend.
	<i>This is a significant change to the previous approach in schools. It means that pupils who do not have a temperature and feel well enough to be in school should attend school</i>
People who have tested positive	as outlined here children and young people aged 18 and under with a positive Covid test (for example if they were tested in a hospital as part of other on-going treatment) should stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days, which is when they are most infectious. This starts from the day after they did the test.

This is different to the guidance for adults, which is to stay home and avoid contact with others for 5 days. This is because children tend to be infectious for less time than adults.

Positive cases or unwell people in households	Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result or who are displaying symptoms of coronavirus should continue to attend as normal.
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Please note that the NHS has updated its list of [symptoms of coronavirus](#) in adults and its list of [symptoms of coronavirus](#) in children.

We take the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all our pupils very seriously. Irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, and can impede pupils' ability to feel confident and happy inside and outside of school.

As a reminder, this year we have developed a new, clear escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concerns using five coloured zones:

Attendance		
97% - 100%	Best chance of academic success	Green
95% - 96.9%	Risk of underachievement	Yellow
93% - 94.9%	Serious risk of underachievement	Amber
90% - 92.9%	Severe risk of underachievement	Pink
0% - 89.9%	Extreme risk – persistent absentee	Red

Attendance %	Learning days lost per academic year
98%	4
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38
75%	48

In cases where levels of attendance have successive drops between weeks, or attendance decreases into a new band (e.g. yellow to amber), we use the following escalation procedures:

- Email from attendance administrators
- Phone call from form tutors/class teachers
- Target setting meeting with Head of Year/Year Lead
- Target setting meeting with Assistant Principal
- Formal letter

It is your responsibility to ensure that your child attends school on a regular basis. If there is no improvement in attendance after internal measures have been put in place then the case may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer at the local authority.

Now that we are returning to the new normal, it is crucial that your child is in school every day they can be for the remainder of the school year. Year 11 and 13 have external exams beginning this half term and all year groups have important end of year internal exams. Please work with us to ensure that your child's attendance remains in the green zone and they have the best chance of academic success.

We look forward to a successful term ahead with your child.

Yours,

Mr Haimendorf
Principal