



Friday 29th October 2021

Dear parents and carers

I hope that you have all had a restful half term break. You may be aware that Covid-19 infection rates in the West Berkshire area have significantly increased and we are now seeing higher infection rates in school-aged children.

Although the immediate health risks of Covid-19 infection to children and young people are low, the potential harm to children from missing or disrupted education is significant. In light of this, West Berkshire Council and the Berkshire West Health Protection Board have recently reviewed current guidance and have recommended some additional measures aimed at reducing the risk of Covid-19 transmission within our schools.

We have reviewed our risk assessments in line with the guidance and **the following additional measures will be in place at Speenhamland when the pupils return on Monday 1st November.**

- Use of face coverings in communal areas (unless exempt) for staff and visitors in primary schools.
- Use of face coverings for parents visiting the school site, including when dropping off and picking up at the end of the day.
- Reducing contact between year groups as far as possible – no whole-school assemblies or whole-school council meetings. We will monitor Covid numbers the first week back to see if the re-introduction of bubbles will be necessary as a further measure.
- Any child or member of staff who has a household member test positive for Covid-19 should be advised to take a **daily lateral flow test for 7 days**, in addition to taking a one-off PCR test. Anyone who is exempt from self-isolation (those aged under 18 or adults who are fully vaccinated) and who tests negative **can continue to attend school during this period of daily lateral flow testing**. The use of LFDs for primary aged children is left to parental discretion and test kits can be accessed via gov.uk or your local pharmacy.
- Any child or member of staff who is identified as a close contact of a positive case via NHS Test and Trace should be advised to take a **daily lateral flow test for 7 days**, in addition to taking a one-off PCR test. Anyone who is exempt from self-isolation (those aged under 18 or adults who are fully vaccinated) and who tests negative **can continue to attend school during this period of daily lateral flow testing**.
- The cancellation of our Autumn Fair next Saturday, to minimise mixing of families and children.

As always, there is a continued focus on hand and respiratory hygiene for all.

We all understand the importance of keeping schools open where possible and we believe by introducing these measures, we will help keep infection rates down. In addition to the above measures, **we encourage parents and carers to take regular twice weekly lateral flow tests**. These can be ordered through gov.uk or collected from a local pharmacy.

We have been very fortunate thus far to have avoided mass disruption. Whilst I appreciate the rest of society is operating under different rules, I continue to appreciate your co-operation and support in these ongoing challenging times. If cases were to increase rapidly and DfE Government thresholds are met, then of course further measures may need to be re-introduced in discussion with Public Health England.

These recommended enhanced measures are anticipated to remain in place until the end of December 2021, although there will be a review in 4 weeks by West Berkshire. As a Trust, we will review all measures at the end of next week.

Unfortunately, I myself have contracted Covid and will not be back in school until after Friday 5th November once my isolation has finished. In my absence, please do not hesitate to speak to Mrs Osmond or pass a message to the school office who can contact me if needed.

Thank you for your support and for working with us to keep our school community safe.

Kind regards



Mrs Julie Lewry
Headteacher

