



Woodlands Lane
Chichester
West Sussex PO19 5PA

Telephone:
01243 785965

e-mail:
schooloffice@st-ants.org

Headteacher:
Miss H Ball
BA (QTS) Hons, NPQH

e-mail:
head@st-ants.org

School website
www.st-ants.org



SEN SPECIALIST
SCHOOLS



Healthy Schools

National Support School
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28th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you have had a lovely half term that has been COVID-free.

This letter is to highlight some key aspects of the new Government guidance for 'Living with Covid' that was announced last Tuesday.

Testing throughout this term

This is predominately directed at pupils in the Secondary Department, however we would also appreciate that if parents are able to, they test their child if they are in the Primary Department.

The guidance for Special Schools regarding lateral flow testing has not changed. The guidance continues to recommend that both staff and pupils in Special Settings (Year 7 and above) continue to test twice weekly. I believe this will be reviewed again on the 1st April.

For educational reasons, as well as for health reasons, we need everyone to play their part in keeping themselves and others safe – please do follow the updated guidance in this letter and above all, do the twice weekly lateral flow testing where possible. Every positive test for an asymptomatic pupil, prevents transmission within our school community and therefore prevents many others from having to take time away from class and from their education.

Face Coverings

Face Coverings are no longer required to be worn in school, this includes both in communal areas and in classrooms. Staff and pupils should follow wider advice on face coverings outside of school, including on transport to and from school. As part of our contingency measures, face coverings will be re-introduced in the event of an outbreak in school as directed by public health.

Staff or pupils who test positive for Covid

The new guidelines now mean that isolation is no longer a legal requirement. However the guidance is clear in that should a child or member of staff test positive for Covid, the recommendation is that they isolate and reduce contact with others. The isolation period will be for a minimum of 5 days and pupils and staff can return after two consecutive negative LFT results taken on and after day 5. The pupil or staff member should not return to school until they have had two negative tests and are no longer displaying symptoms.

This is the policy that the school will follow and anyone (staff and pupils) testing positive with COVID, must follow the guidelines above.

FAQs based on the Government guidance from Feb 24th 2022

What are the symptoms of Covid 19, with the Omicron variant?

- Still look out for the classic symptoms of Covid: high temperature, loss of taste/smell and/or a dry, persistent cough.
- But also look out for these newer symptoms associated with Omicron: a headache, runny nose, sneezing and sore throat.

If my child has any symptoms, what should I do?

- Please don't assume or decide for yourself that your child doesn't have Covid, if your child is showing any of the symptoms, book a PCR test (lab processed), do not rely on a LFT test.
- With symptoms, pupils will need a negative result from a PCR test (lab processed) in order to be allowed back to school.
- With symptoms, a negative result from a lateral flow test (self-test kit) isn't good enough for your child to be allowed back to school.
- While you wait for a PCR test and for the result, do not send your child into school.
- Contact the school as soon as you can to let us know that they have symptoms and you are waiting for a test result.

If my child develops symptoms at school, what will happen?

- We will contact you, asking you to come and collect your child so they can self-isolate until they have a PCR test.
- While your child waits for you to collect them, we will isolate them within school.
- If you send your child into school with symptoms, we will isolate them and require you to come and collect them. Please do not get cross with us: we are simply applying the guidance to keep everyone safe.

What should I do if my child tests positive for Covid?

- Register your test result with NHS and please let us know at school by emailing: schooloffice@st-ants.org or calling 01243 785965 after 8am
- Your child **must not** come into school and isolate for a minimum of 5 days.
- If on days 5 and 6 they have negative lateral flow tests (24 hours apart) and they do not have a high temperature, then their isolation ends at the end of day 6, and they can return to school on day 7.
- If they have a positive lateral flow test result on days 5 or 6 then they need to continue to do an LFT until they have two negative tests.
- The first day of self-isolation is when they first show symptoms.
- If they had no symptoms, the first day of the day isolation period is the day of the test.

What happens if my child is a close contact to someone who has tested positive?

- Your child can continue as normal, the new guidance indicates that there is no requirement to test daily after contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

With very best wishes

Helen Ball

Headteacher

