



4th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year to you and your family. I hope you have managed to have an enjoyable and safe Christmas holiday. Through 2022 I am sure we are all keen to see our daily experiences not being constantly interrupted as a result of COVID. However, it does appear that the Omicron variant is significantly more transmissible, and unfortunately this is likely to lead to further disruption in the coming weeks. We must continue to do all we can to keep each other safe and reduce the chances of people suffering from the impacts of the virus.

Whilst we have been away from school, the [Government](#) has made some changes to its advice on self-isolation and the wearing of face coverings. Please read the following carefully and as, always, do not hesitate to contact us at school if you need to talk through the guidance.

What should I do if my child shows symptoms of COVID-19 or they test positive using a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) at home?

It remains vitally important that any individual stays at home if they display any of the three main symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, a new continuous cough, or a loss of taste and/or smell). They must immediately seek a PCR test and self-isolate until the result is confirmed.

If the PCR result is positive, the 10 day self-isolation period may now be reduced to 7 days. This is only if LFD tests are taken at home on day 6 and 7 of the self-isolation period and both results are reported to the [NHS](#). The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken at least 24 hours apart. If both test results are negative, and your child does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test and return to school from day 8.

We continue to encourage all pupils to take LFD tests at home twice a week. Please support your child with home testing, report the result to the NHS, and if they do have a positive result they must stay at home and seek a confirmatory PCR test within two days of the LFD test.

What does my child do if they are a close contact of a confirmed positive case?

Following on from last term, schools will not be identifying close contacts of a positive case. NHS Test and Trace will be contacting individuals if they are identified as a positive case. We will of course assist the NHS if they get in touch with school to identify possible contacts.

Children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should now take a LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend school as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

The Local Outbreak Team have advised that if you are a household contact (in other words someone has tested positive for COVID in your home) you should automatically follow the Government advice above. They also state that contacts of cases, especially household contacts, should take a PCR test as a precaution.

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Does my child still need to wear a face covering at school?

The Government has reintroduced the requirement for a pupil (unless exempt) to wear a face covering whenever they are in the school building. This once again includes classrooms as well as corridors and indoor communal spaces. Therefore, we expect all children (unless exempt) to bring a plain face covering to school to wear whilst they are inside the school building including lessons. Please be aware that the guidance states that teachers would not ordinarily be expected to wear a face covering in the classroom if they are at the front of the class, to support education delivery.

Our Whole School COVID Risk Assessment and Outbreak Management Plan have been updated to reflect these latest changes. The Risk Assessment will be available on our [website](#) and demonstrates the wide range of measures remaining in place to minimise the risks of transmission as much as possible.

Although we do have a small number of staff isolating due to COVID, **I am pleased to confirm that all pupils can return to school as normal from Wednesday 5th January 2022.** Whilst we will always do all that is feasibly possible to keep Stafford Manor High School open to pupils through the coming weeks, it may be that circumstances mean some children will be required to study at home for a short period of time. This would always be a very last resort, but if we do have a significant outbreak of cases within a group, or staff absence is such that we cannot safely accommodate pupils, we may have to take the difficult decision that some pupils need to remain at home.

We appreciate your understanding that these decisions are often required with short notice and in some cases may require children to be sent home from school. If your child is required to stay at home, work will be provided for them through Show My Homework and Microsoft Teams. If your child does need to stay at home, we will always be informing you as soon as possible and doing all we can to support you and your child with their learning.

We look forward to your child returning to school tomorrow. All pupils must be wearing correct school uniform and we will be contacting parents if our expectations are not being met. Please also support your child in bringing the correct equipment to school so they are ready to learn from their first lesson. Our uniform policy can be viewed on our [website](#) and please contact school if you need any support with uniform, equipment or attendance.

Despite the continued focus on safety measures in school, we will also continue to prioritise the quality of education your child receives. All the staff at Stafford Manor High School are fully committed to doing all they can to ensure your child fulfils their potential and achieves their ambitions. Throughout this term and beyond, we will be making further developments to what we offer in pursuit of doing the very best for all pupils. Remember that you can contact us through the main school office if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

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