



18th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

After the first two weeks of the new term, it is clear that COVID continues to circulate amongst the community. I would like to thank you for your support and following the latest self-isolation guidance if your child tests positive. We must not become complacent and due to the high level of transmissibility with Omicron, the situation could escalate quickly if we do not follow all existing systems and procedures.

As from Tuesday 11th January the Government have temporarily suspended the need to get a PCR test for someone who tests positive using a LFD test at home. Therefore, if someone has no symptoms but tests positive following a LFD test, they must stay at home and follow the self-isolation guidance immediately. Please do report your home tests results to the NHS, and inform school of any positive result. For anyone who does have symptoms of COVID, they must still book a PCR test as normal through the NHS or contacting 119.

If your child does test positive using a LFD at home or from a PCR test, the self-isolation period can now potentially be reduced from 10 days to 5 full days. Pupils can return to school on the 6th day if they have had two consecutive negative LFD tests on the morning of day 5 and day 6 of the isolation period. The tests must be taken no earlier than the fifth day, the two tests must be at least 24 hours apart and both results must be negative. Results must be reported to the NHS and please inform the school if your child is able to return.

Even if your child has two negative tests on day 5 and day 6 but they continue to have a high temperature, it is advised that you seek medical advice and they must continue to self-isolate. If the result of either test is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest. If for any reason someone cannot take LFD tests, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days.

Within school we continue to implement a wide range of systems and procedures to keep each other safe. Please continue to ensure your child brings a face covering to school (unless exempt) as these are required in all indoor spaces including classrooms. It is also remains important for children to sanitise hand regularly, catch coughs and sneezes, and clean their workspace at the end of use.

We are also continuing to follow Public Health Advice to ensure areas are well ventilated by keeping windows and doors open where necessary. I am sure you will understand the importance of this, and we appreciate that this does affect the temperature of some rooms as we are now in the winter period. As we have advised previously, adding layers can help your child feel much warmer when they are at school. To ensure your child is prepared for the cooler weather we would recommend that children have:

- a plain black V-neck jumper beneath their blazer.
- a 'base layer' such as a vest or plain t-shirt under their school shirt in addition, or as an alternative, to their jumper.
- a warm (preferably waterproof) coat or outer layer to wear over their blazer outdoors and in the classroom in extreme circumstances.

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Where necessary a teacher will allow an individual to wear a coat in the classroom if required. If you feel your child would benefit from wearing their school PE hoodie under their blazer, please contact the main office to request approval. School staff will always be balancing the need to maintain ventilation whilst providing appropriate advice to pupils. I would also remind you that the school day starts at 8.45am and children should arrive no later than 8.40am through the pedestrian gate.

As more and more of our children communicate online and use social media on a regular basis, it is important we all do everything we can to protect them of online abuse and harassment. The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza DBE, has recently published a [guidance document](#) for parents helping to support them to understand online sexual harassment. It is a sensitive topic, and the parent guide provides some useful advice on how you might approach a conversation with your child. The information has been produced in discussion with 16 to 21 year olds who were asked what they felt parents and carers should know and what they should say when talking about sexualised bullying and the pressures of growing up online.

The Government's new [Stop Abuse Together website](#) can also help you learn to spot the signs of sexual abuse and have regular conversations with your child which can help keep them safe and know when it's right to reach out for more support. This site is useful for students, parents and professionals. If you feel something's not right, you can call the NSPCC helpline on [0808 800 5000](#) no matter what's happened, there's always someone who will listen to you and take what you say seriously.

We are hopeful that we continue to see reduced rates of COVID transmission within our school community over the next few months. Teachers have had a relentless focus on ensuring the quality of education has been sustained despite all the disruptions to lessons due to the pandemic. Indeed, we continue to ensure the latest techniques are being used in classrooms to enable children to make rapid progress in their learning and preparing them for their future examinations. Parents and carers can help with this by supporting your child to complete their homework by monitoring Show My Homework, providing a quiet space for them to work at home, and congratulating them when homework has been completed.

Plans are already in place to reintroduce other activities and events that have been 'on hold' for almost two years. For example, it is our intention to run the Dyffryn residential visit this June that was originally planned for Year 7 in 2020 (these students are now in Year 9!) We are looking at how we provide similar activities and other visits for pupils who have not had such opportunities during the pandemic. We are also looking to introduce a wider range of extra-curricular activities this term for children to take part in at lunch time. Our Student Council is expanding and can once again meet together to represent the collective view of all pupils and plan whole school events. The Careers Programme is getting back to normal although our Careers Fair has been postponed until later in the school year. Our vision at Stafford Manor High School is to 'Inspire Lifelong Learning' and this applies not just in the classroom, but also to the wider aspects of school life.

We continue to see the recognition of all the work we do through the increased number of families wishing to join our amazing school. In September of this year, we will be oversubscribed in every year group for the first time in a generation. As always we appreciate your support and understanding as we navigate through the next few weeks and months. If you do need to get in touch with us for any reason, then please contact the main school office. Take care.

Yours sincerely



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