



March 2022

Dear Parents,

It was lovely to welcome all children back to school after the half term break last week. The new morning routine is working well and I have received many positive comments from parents about how much quicker and smoother it is. Thank you for your support with this.

Below you will find some useful information about COVID-19 as well as some information to raise awareness about some potentially harmful videos of the war in Ukraine on social media.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs R. Leonard
Head Teacher

COVID-19

We have been advised that there are a number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 within school. The school remains open and your child should continue to attend as normal if they remain well.

What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Although there is no longer a legal requirement for people with COVID-19 to self-isolate, if you have any of the main symptoms of COVID-19 or a positive test result, **the Public Health advice is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.**

Self-isolation can be ended after 5 full days following two consecutive negative LFD test and you do not have a high temperature. You can take an LFD test from 5 days after the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you did not have symptoms), and another LFD test on the following day. If both these test results are negative, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test.

If your test result is positive on day 5, you can carry on doing rapid lateral flow tests every day until you get 2 negative test results in a row. You should stop testing after you have had 2 consecutive negative test results.

What to do if there is a case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your household?

Children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has COVID-19 should continue to attend the setting as normal.

Measures in school to reduce transmission

In line with our COVID-19 risk assessment, we have the following measures in place:

- staggered start and finish times
- all rooms in school are well ventilated and checked using CO2 monitors
- children and staff sanitise their hands before and after moving around school.
- children are actively encouraged to wash their hands at regular intervals throughout the day.
- both halls are utilised for lunch time to minimise the number of children in one place at any one time
- robust risk assessments are carried out before any educational visits

We have sought advice from our local Public Health team and in line with our contingency plan, which all schools are required by the DfE to have in place, we will be reintroducing the following measures:

- face masks for staff members in communal areas where there are more than 2 positive cases
- daily testing reintroduced for staff members where they work in a class with more than 2 positive cases.
- additional cleaning to take place within the affected areas, including touch points.

We will continue to review non-essential activities such as after school clubs, education visits, visitors into school etc. and I will update you if anything changes.

War in Ukraine

Watching the horrors of war unfold has been very difficult for many adults this week. TV and Radio news are full of information about the awful attacks on the Ukrainians and, perhaps one advantage of social media, is letting us all see what happens when one country invades another. Much of the information on TV has, to a certain extent, been sanitised with the most horrific content removed, this is not the case on social media.

We have been made aware that some children across County Durham are seeing horrific pictures and videos of the war, and some are struggling to cope with what they have seen. There is not one particular app or website that is worse than the others. Pictures and videos of the war are available on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and probably lots of other social media sites too. In addition they are being reposted so they do not always come directly from The Ukraine. Although, thankfully we have not been made aware of any children watching these videos in our school, we strongly recommend you take some actions to help your children:

1. Explain what you would like them to do if they see something scary (turn the device upside down and get either Mum, Dad or their carer – they are not in trouble).
2. Carefully consider what social media (if any) is suitable for your children. The minimum age for most platforms is 13 because the content providers cannot guarantee that it is suitable for a younger audience.
3. Set up parental controls on devices. Many apps have settings which try and limit the most graphic content – but even with safety features turned on, content is not guaranteed to be “child friendly”. The website ‘Internet Matters’ <https://www.internetmatters.org/> is particularly useful in providing advice on most apps and security settings.
4. Talk and listen to your children about the war in Ukraine (age appropriate). We can’t pretend this isn’t happening and they may well have questions and worries which are better discussed than kept secret.
5. If you have serious concerns then please talk to the school as staff there may be able to help, or it might be that other children from the school are equally affected.