



Hebburn Comprehensive School

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DRT/KM

Head Teacher: Mr D R Thompson

3 December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am sure you will be aware of recent developments regarding the Omicron variant of COVID-19. Following the Prime Minister's announcement, the Department for Education has released updated guidance for schools, which is outlined below.

Face Coverings

Due to measures being stepped up in South Tyneside after half term, pupils are already wearing face coverings, unless exempt. Following updates to national guidance, pupils will be expected to wear face coverings in communal areas. It is important that pupils bring a face covering to school and ensure that it is worn correctly, particularly in corridors, as they do become very busy. Please ensure that your child has a face covering for school. Those pupils who are exempt will be issued with an exemption badge.

Testing

We strongly encourage pupils to continue with twice weekly testing. Following a lateral flow test, you should isolate immediately and book a PCR test. The government has asked schools to test pupils when we return after the Christmas break. Details of how this will be done will be included in the end of term newsletter.

Contact Tracing and Isolation

The current guidance in relation to contact tracing and isolation remains in place. Close contacts of those testing positive for COVID **do not** need to isolate. Test and trace will advise close contacts to book a PCR test, but there is no requirement to isolate, unless the test result is positive.

However, in a change to previous guidance, all individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will be contacted directly and required to self-isolate immediately and asked to book a PCR test. They will be informed by the local health protection team or NHS Test and Trace if they fall into this category and will be provided with details about self-isolation.

Vaccinations

If your child is aged 12 or over and has not been vaccinated, this can be booked on the NHS website. At this stage, it does not look like there will be another vaccination in school, but we will inform parents and carers if this changes.

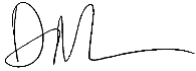


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Finally

Our cases have been relatively low since the beginning of half term; however, over recent weeks, we have seen an increase in the number of positive cases in school, including both pupils and staff. It is extremely important, therefore, that we continue to ensure good hand and respiratory hygiene and take all necessary precautions to reduce the spread of the virus.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr D R Thompson
Head Teacher