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Term 1 Update – COVID-19 Important Messages

Dear Parents/Carers,

I just want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has followed the new procedures we have put in place this term. As a staff team, we are very grateful for the support we have received from parents during these more challenging circumstances we find ourselves in this year. We are pleased with how things have run with the new drop off and pick up arrangements and other measures that have been implemented, but of course will be monitoring procedures over the next few weeks and will keep you updated with any changes we need to make.

Drop off / Pick up Procedures

I want to thank all parents who are following the new procedures in place. Once your child has been collected, please leave the playground immediately. Please do not stand or wait in the area between the children's lines and the parents' lines (indicated by the orange block in the image below) as this is a walkway for those exiting the playground. All parents / carers must stay on the parents' side of the playground and not cross over to the children's year group lines.

Due to the increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in the community, we are now asking that parents / carers do not have face to face conversations with members of staff at drop off and pick up times. Please email or phone the school wherever possible. If it is a quick message and a 2 metre distance can be maintained, this is fine, but if you have a query which cannot be answered in this way, then you will be asked to contact the school office by phone or email and the relevant member of staff will get back to you. Staff will also use email or a phone call from now on if they need to inform you of something which has arisen during the school day.

Please **do not come to the school office during the drop off period** and only come to the office at other times unless absolutely necessary. Email or phone call is the preferred method of contact.



Lunchtimes

We are now operating with staggered lunchtimes and children are eating in their classrooms. When the children used to use the hall to eat their lunch, they were able to go outside to play immediately after finishing their lunch. Unfortunately, we do not have enough members of staff to allow for every class to have a member of staff in the classroom with those still eating, as well as a staff member outside with those who finish eating early. Therefore, to ensure the class remain settled, especially those who finish their lunch early and become restless, it may be necessary for music to be played or a video (an educational video which is age appropriate such as Deadly 60, historical clips or programmes such as Alphablocks for the younger children) to be played on the interactive whiteboard for a short time. The children are still allowed to chat with their friends. The lunchbreak supervisors monitor the classrooms and take the whole class outside after the 25-30 minutes eating period has ended. Anyone with food still to eat is asked to take it outside and eat on one of the picnic benches in their designated playground area. If your child has always had specialist provision during the lunchtime period, please be assured that adjusted provision is still in place and will continue.

I will be in contact with you over the coming weeks to confirm when hot school lunches will be available to all classes again. We are working with our catering provider (Integra) and are keen to get these restarted as soon as we can.

Timings for lunch:

11.40 – 12.40 Years Rec, 1, 2 and 3 lunchtime

12.15 – 1.15 Years 4, 5 and 6 lunchtime

Symptoms of COVID-19

We thank you for your cooperation and understanding with keeping your child at home if they have one of the symptoms of COVID-19 until a negative test result is received. We are very aware that booking a test online has been extremely difficult for some. If you keep refreshing the site some new test options usually become available, or try again a couple of hours later. If the problem persists for more than a day, please inform the school office via email.

Before we send any child home from school with one of the symptoms of COVID-19 (a new, continuous cough, high temperature or a loss or change to their sense of smell or taste), advice is sought from Public Health South Gloucestershire. If your child presents with a new, continuous cough (or one of the other symptoms), they will be sent home from school and asked to be tested. Whether this is due to a cold, flu or COVID-19, by keeping your child off school and getting a test, this prevents any type of virus from circulating in the classroom. All household members must also isolate until a negative test is received. We sympathise with how frustrating and inconvenient this may prove to be for families, but as a school we have no choice but to act on Public Health South Gloucestershire directives and advice.

Important Message from the NHS Test and Trace Service

As you are aware, the demand for testing has increased significantly and the NHS Test and Trace service has issued the following information: *'We have seen unprecedented demand for testing recently. NHS Test and Trace figures show that between mid-June and the end of August the number of people getting tested for the first time rose by 63% and we have seen demand for testing increase significantly again this week.'*

*People with symptoms absolutely must come forward to get a test as this will help us stop the spread of the virus. As we manage this period of high demand, it is especially important that if individuals don't have symptoms, and have not specifically been advised to take a test, they should not be coming forward for a test **because they could be taking a test away from someone who really needs it.** A recent survey at testing sites suggests around a quarter of people who have accessed tests did not have symptoms.*



Since the start of the pandemic, we have vastly expanded the nation's testing capacity, more than doubling the capacity of the NHS and PHE laboratories as well as setting up an entirely new nationwide network of testing sites and new Lighthouse laboratories to process samples.

We continue to expand capacity even further and to help ensure that testing is being used by those who need it most. Schools have been issued with [guidance on testing](#) and the advice for parents and teachers. It is very important that this guidance is followed. Schools should not advise pupils or teachers to take a test unless they exhibit one or more of the listed symptoms. If there is a confirmed case then schools should not advise entire classes or year groups to get tested. Only those with symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test.'

Important information regarding testing for COVID-19

- The main symptoms of coronavirus are the following: **a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.** Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.
- If your child has **Covid-19 symptoms, get a test.** You can do this online [here](#) or by ringing 119. Please keep trying as appointments are released throughout the day. You must **inform the school that your child is getting tested and specify the symptoms. To book a test use the [online booking portal](#).** This will then give you a range of testing options available in your local area. Keep refreshing the site if it says no test options are available or try again after a couple of hours. The test options which should come up include the following (but walk-in test centres may also become available):
 - **a drive-in test centre** – this is likely to be the fastest way to get a test and a result through. The nearest ones for South Gloucestershire Local Authority are Bristol (Bristol Airport) or Gloucester (Hempstead Meadow) [online booking portal](#)
 - **a home test kit** – parents or carers can order a home test kit for their child or young person [online booking portal](#). *Do not stockpile tests – if you develop symptoms in the future you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.*
- It's really important that anyone with Covid-19 symptoms can get a test. This will help us stop the spread of the virus. If you don't have Covid-19 symptoms and you are trying to book a test, do not come forward for a test – **you could be taking a test away from someone who really needs it.** This is increasingly important as we head into autumn and winter and more people will get colds and the flu. Only if you have **one** of the 3 symptoms should you book a test.
- If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then that person **must get tested and the rest of the household should self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results.** If you or other members of the household don't have symptoms, then you should not get a test – only people with symptoms should get tested. The vast majority of people who are tested in person get their results the very next day. [Full guidance on self-isolation is available on gov.uk.](#)

Negative Test Result:

- We ask that if your child is symptomatic and has a test, if this is **negative**, you must still **notify the school immediately of the outcome.** They will then notify Public Health South Gloucestershire to update their records in line with their standard operating procedures.
- If the test result is negative, your child does not need to self-isolate as long as
 - everyone in the household who has symptoms tests negative



- everyone in your support bubble who has symptoms tests negative
 - you were not told to self-isolate for 14 days by NHS Test and Trace – if you were, see [what to do if you've been told you've been in contact with someone who has coronavirus](#)
 - They feel well – if they feel unwell, they will need to stay at home until they're feeling better
 - If they have diarrhea or they're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.
- If you are self-isolating or in quarantine, then a **negative test result does not mean you can end isolation early**. The virus can take time to develop and so a test early on does not prove that you won't go on to develop the virus. That means you could still be at risk of spreading the disease to other people.

Positive Test Result:

- We ask that if your child is symptomatic and has a test, if this is **positive**, you must **notify the school immediately of the outcome**. We will then notify Public Health South Gloucestershire, the Education department of the Council and the regional PHE health protection team to advise anyone who has come into close contact with your child to self-isolate in line with national guidance; this will be managed sensitively.
- If your child had the test because they had symptoms, they will need to keep self-isolating for **at least 10 days from when their symptoms started**. If your child had a test but have not had symptoms, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days from when they had the test. Anyone in the same household and your support bubble must also self-isolate for 14 days from when your child starts self-isolating.
- If there were to be any confirmed case with a child or young person in our school, then our leaders will work with Public Health South Gloucestershire, the Education department of the Council and the regional PHE health protection team to advise anyone who has come into close contact with the confirmed case to self-isolate in line with national guidance.

Important Numbers

- The local NHS 111 service is currently experiencing high numbers of calls from people seeking Covid-19 tests. The 111 service is **not able to arrange tests** and callers have to be redirected to the correct **119 number**, or online service, which is frustrating for individuals and affects 111 capacity. We need to make sure that 111 is protected for people who are ringing about other medical and health issues.
- You can find NHS information and advice on how to treat coronavirus symptoms at home [here](#). If you are concerned about your symptoms and need medical advice, use the NHS 111 online coronavirus service or call 111.

Once again I would like to thank all parents/carers for your cooperation and understanding with these measures in place.

Kind regards

Emma Cholmondeley
Acting Head Teacher

