Friday 10th September 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

It has been really good to see the children back in school. I would like to thank you all for your patience as we adjust to the new drop off and pick up routines now in place. This seems to be working well and is minimising the contact the children have across year groups.

The children have been amazing adjusting to the new restrictions in place and have a good understanding of why we need to be vigilant.

As we enter the winter months, it is inevitable that we will see a rise in coughs, sneezes and sore throats. Obviously, these symptoms are similar to those recognised when suffering with COVID. Please see guidance of symptoms related to colds/flu/COVID <https://www.gmmh.nhs.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jijm4n6563.pdf&ver=9088>

However, the government guidance for schools is very clear:

*‘Essential measures include:*

* ***a requirement that people who are ill stay at home***
* *robust hand and respiratory hygiene*
* *enhanced cleaning arrangements*
* *active engagement with NHS Test and Trace*
* *formal consideration of how to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school wherever possible and minimise the potential for contamination so far as is reasonably practicable’*

The guidance also states:

***‘Who Should Not Be in Attendance?***

*Anyone with symptoms* ***or where someone else in the household has symptoms should not attend school.*** *(Please refer to NHS testing website:* [*https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/*](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/)*)’*

To protect everybody in our school community, we will be following this guidance very closely. We understand that this may become quite disruptive but we must all actively help to prevent an outbreak within our school. So again, I ask for your patience as we manage every potential case with individual care and consideration. The guidance states:

#### *‘Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS*[*testing and tracing for coronavirus*](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/)*website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.*

#### *If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better. Other members of their household can stop self-isolating.*

#### *If someone tests positive, they should follow the*[*guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance)*and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.’*

#### If we do have a positive COVID case in school, we will take swift action and contact the Local Health Protection Team. A rapid risk assessment will take place to confirm who has been in close contact with the infected person and they will then be asked to self-isolate for 14 days.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school office if you have any questions regarding your child’s attendance or procedures that are in place due to the current COVID situation.

Kind regards,

Mrs Sarbutts