



Lowick and Holy Island C of E First Schools

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Dear Parents and Carers,

First of all, a huge welcome back to all our children after the half term break. We hope you have had a good week off. During last week, there were changes to national guidance regarding Covid-19 and schools have received updated operational guidance. This is aligning to the government's plan of 'living with Covid' going forward.

The priority of the latest guidance remains delivering face to face, high quality education to all pupils, noting that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment and mental and physical health. It remains a legal duty for parents to send their children to school unless they are unwell or isolating due to being a close contact of someone with Covid.

Key changes:

From 24th February close contacts of people who have Covid are no longer *required* to self-isolate or take daily tests. However, as you will note below, self-isolating is still advised. Contact tracing has ended.

Face coverings are no longer advised in school in any area.

Staff are no longer advised to undertake asymptomatic testing twice weekly.

We continue to do the following:

We are strongly encouraging good hygiene for everyone – we will still be asking everyone to wash their hands frequently, conducting regular cleaning and encouraging the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' respiratory hygiene we have been promoting for quite a while now.

We will keep the school well ventilated with windows open and doors opened periodically. Our CO2 monitors continue to show we have good air quality in all areas of the school – probably aided by open windows and the open plan building.

We will still seek to work outside where possible.

We will continue to offer remote education for children absent due to Covid.

We will keep our risk assessment in place as a working document.

We have a contingency plan in case of exceptional circumstances.

What to do you if you or your child develop Covid symptoms.

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a recent onset of any of the following:

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

If you have any of these symptoms you should order a PCR test. You are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people while you are waiting for the test result.

Follow the guidance in <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

There is no longer a legal requirement for people with coronavirus (COVID-19) infection to self-isolate, however 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**. If you can, let people who you have been in close contact with know about your positive test result so that they can follow this guidance.

The following advice is for:

- people with any of the main symptoms of COVID-19
- people who have received a positive COVID-19 lateral flow device (LFD) or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test result
- people who live in the same household as, or who have had close contact with, someone who has COVID-19

This also applies to children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting. Please let the school know promptly.

The government advice is still to stay isolated for at least 5 days but if you test negatively for two consecutive days from day 5 you can safely return to your normal routine.

Education Recovery

To support our education recovery programme, we have asked Mrs Waddington to stay on after her maternity cover is finished at Easter. She will remain with us through the summer term to enable us to offer tutoring, small group work and bespoke catch up learning to children in class 1 and class 2.

We will continue to support pupil wellbeing and keep this as one of our priorities, recognising that many children are suffering from greater anxiety, stress or low mood in response to the Covid pandemic.

The pandemic has been running for more than two years now and affecting how schools operate since our sudden first closure in March 2020. It feels like a long road we are walking and it is not over yet. However, it has given us a chance to see how well we can meet challenges as a team and as a community. I would like to thank the staff for their continuing resilience through this time. We look forward to welcoming new staff this week – Olive Fortune as our new school cook and Megan Adams as a new teaching assistant.

I also would like to sincerely thank all of you for your continuing support and understanding.

Kind regards,

Rebecca