

14th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

7 days COVID Isolation.

Recently we wrote to you regarding the Trust decision to maintain the 10-day isolation period in the short term and that we would review it on the 26th January 2022.

Following the announcement on the 13th January by central government regarding reducing the isolation period to 5 days from Monday 17th January, we have made the decision to move to 7 full days isolation guidance (see below) and once again review regularly.

You can take an LFD test from 6 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. The second LFD test should be taken at least 24 hours later. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result. (Central government 11th January 2022)

(Please note that if your child is still testing positive on day 6 and 7 or still has high temperature then they need to isolate for the full 10 days.)

Although some medical evidence has been made available we are being cautious at this time and will review regularly by monitor what is happening elsewhere prior to acting on this guidance fully and increasing risk and rates once again in our schools.

We appreciate that the Trust requirement for a 7-day isolation period differs to the 5-day isolation period for the general public (17th January 2022). However, in our schools all individuals are in close contact with other people outside of their households in an enclosed classroom which is crowded and ventilation is somewhat limited in some areas.

We also have both pupils and staff who are considered to be vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk and therefore at risk of serious illness, who according to the guidance are now required to be in school. As I am sure you understand, pupils returning after 5 days who are still potentially infectious, put these vulnerable pupils and staff at an unacceptable risk.

Like pupils and their families, we want all of our pupils back in school as soon as possible. Throughout the pandemic, we have followed and responded to the guidance of the DfE and the NHS in the best interest of the pupils, staff and wider society, even when, as on this occasion there is ambiguity regarding the advice we are receiving from different agencies.

We will review this situation on the **26th January** when the government will make further announcements regarding Plan B and national guidance will be updated accordingly.

Yours faithfully



Helena Hamilton
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