

24th February 2022

Dear parents and carers,

COVID Update for schools

Firstly, welcome back from the half term break, whilst it's been blustery, it's been a busy start back to school, with some exciting sporting events, wonderful learning and the prospect of 2 residentials imminently, and a return to a new normal.

As you know the Government announcement on Monday demonstrates that there is increasing confidence that the country is moving from a pandemic to living and dealing with COVID. Guidance for schools followed the next day, which I have read and have used to inform our latest risk assessment, contingency plans and school protocols.

As the scientists acknowledge, the virus hasn't gone away, and I want to reassure you that your child's safety has been at the forefront of our thoughts throughout this situation, and will be at the centre of our considerations going forwards, along with our duty of care to them, the staff and the wider community. The school's guidance, and the 20+ documents, that inform our update show a shift from the word **must** (legally binding) to **should** (strongly advised). Using that [guidance](#), a number of operational changes in school will take place:

Attendance – staff and pupils

Attendance is mandatory for all and it is a priority. CEV and vulnerable staff and pupils will attend school.

No need for limited mixing or bubbles

Children will be able to be grouped flexibly and mix freely.

Classrooms and resources, including reading books

Children will share school resources, but must still have their own water bottle, brought in daily, and bring in a book bag with their books (not ruck sacks)

School Start and Finish times

The school day will continue to start at 8:45, please arrive then and children will start activities at 8:50. The day ends at 3:15. We will continue to enter via the main entrance for Years 1-6 and the playground steps for Year R. Exit will be by the car park, reception steps and car park.

Please arrive on time, at the start and end of the day, you do not need to wear face coverings, unless you choose to do so for personal reasons

Safe Hygiene

When children enter their classroom, they will continue to sanitise their hands. They will also sanitise their hands when they leave the classroom at playtime, lunchtime and home time. They will always wash their hands thoroughly before they eat. Tissues and lidded bins are in each classroom so that children can 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. Please continue to encourage this at home.

Staff

Staff will not be testing twice weekly, but will test should they feel unwell, as a proactive measure. They will test and isolate if they have symptoms of COVID. Staff will not need to wear masks or visors in classrooms or corridors, but may choose to at other times, as a personal choice.

If your child is unwell

Please do not send your child to school if they have a temperature or are unwell or ill in any way at all. This is for the safety of everybody. If your child becomes ill whilst at school, you will be asked to collect them immediately. Please ensure, if you are unavailable, that you share contact details with the office of another person who can collect your child.

If they display symptoms of COVID they will be isolated until you arrive. You should then make arrangements for them to be tested, using a PCR or LFD. School should be informed of the result as soon as possible. A positive result will mean that the child will need to isolate for up to 10 days, following the latest [NHS guidance](#) and [Government self-isolation advice](#). Currently, if your child is unwell with other symptoms you can LFT test them, and should this be positive you do not need to go for a PCR, but may choose to. Your child should self-isolate in this case for up to 10 days, or in line with the guidance previously sent out. The government are keen that everybody continues to respond positively with the track and trace system. School are not¹ legally bound to do this, but I will keep you informed of the latest outbreaks. If the LFD is negative, we would ask that the child does not return until they are 'well'. I will monitor guidance, as we know that this will change in the coming weeks.

Isolation

The guidance indicates that whilst the law has changed, the [directives](#) for public safety remain. We will follow this guidance, so isolation continues to be up to 10 days, unless you have 2 negative tests on day 5 and 6. Please remember that the day symptoms start, or the day of the PCR test is day 0. Isolation will finish **after day 5 at the earliest**. Please liaise with the office and Mrs Lambert about the return date, given our schools protocols. We will review this weekly, or as directed by Public Health.

Before and After School Club

Children booked into club will continue to be able to access BAASC. Any ad-hoc arrangements are purely at Mrs Swains discretion and will be based on numbers of children and staffing. This may change on a daily basis. The only way to guarantee a place is to book a place.

Sports Clubs

Clubs will continue, based on a first come first served basis. Details will be in the weekly newsletter

Possible further disruption to schooling

It is almost guaranteed now that schools will remain open, but there is the very real chance that there may be further disruption to 'schooling' for individual children who need to isolate, or are unwell. Obviously, we already have a system in place that worked well when children have had to isolate, we are using Dojo to communicate and we have TEAMS accounts for all children across the school, should we need to blend our teaching and learning. Any moves to remote learning or blended learning will be communicated in good time, as soon as I know. Changes to our remote learning protocols will also be communicated.

We thank you, as always, for the support you have given us so far. It is your kind words of encouragement and support that mean everything to our staff.

Again, I assure you that whatever happens and wherever this journey continues to take us, we will always have our whole school community's very best interest at heart.

As ever, if you have any questions about any of the above please contact me, headteacher@stathern.leics.sch.uk


Take care and stay safe,

Warmest wishes,



Mrs Karen Lambert

Head Teacher

 @stathernprimary

