



## The White Rose Federation

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5<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year; hopefully you had a relaxing and joyful Christmas. We enjoyed welcoming the children back to school this morning and we're ready for the term ahead.

As you will no doubt be aware, cases of COVID-19 have continued to increase both nationally and locally over the last few weeks. With the aforementioned in mind, I wanted to make you aware of the mitigations that will be implemented from today:

- Mask wearing will be required amongst staff (in communal areas) and parents/carers will be encouraged to wear them at drop off & pick up (unless medically exempt). **This is especially important given the highly transmissible Omicron variant of COVID-19.**
- Drop-off and collection arrangements will remain the same.
- We will continue to reinforce the importance of regular hand washing with soap and water or using hand sanitiser when soap and water are not readily available.
- We will continue to promote good respiratory hygiene and "Catch it, Bin it, Kill it" messages to encourage children to catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue and dispose of it in the nearest waste bin.
- Well-ventilated classrooms, which means a window or two will be open throughout the day and the air will be purged by opening the door fully several times a day.
- Limited mixing of children in school where possible.

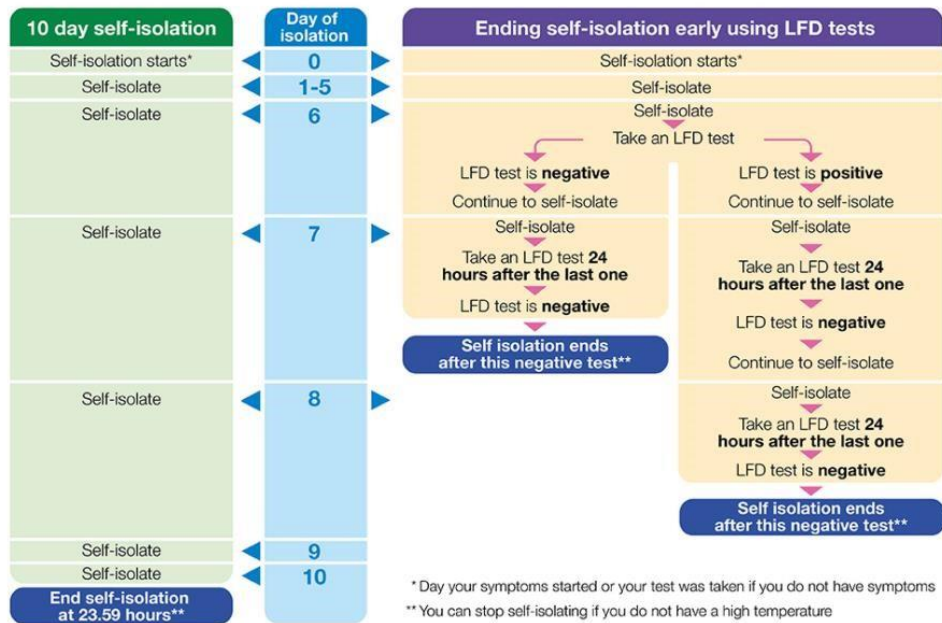
If confirmed cases begin to rise in school, we will take every measure we can to limit transmission, following our COVID-19 contingency framework, which has been in place since September, and is available on each school's website.

### **Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

Since Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason. Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. 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 and return to your education setting from day 8.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10-day period of self-isolation. Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).



### Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Children under 5 are not being advised to take part in daily testing of close contacts. If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and should not start daily testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result. If the test is positive, they should follow the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

### Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice on COVID-19 vaccination for at-risk 5 to 11 year olds

Children aged 5 to 11 years in a clinical risk group, or who are a household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed, will be offered two doses of the vaccine, 8 weeks apart. Further advice about vaccinations for this group can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/jcvi-update-on-advice-for-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people/jcvi-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people-22-december-2021](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/jcvi-update-on-advice-for-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people/jcvi-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-children-and-young-people-22-december-2021).

## **Staff Shortages**

I am sure you are aware that many businesses and services are currently suffering from staff shortages due to high rates of staff contracting COVID-19. As a school we can usually rely on supply agencies to provide staff at short notice to make sure teachers and teaching assistant positions are filled. However, this was becoming a problem in the autumn term due to the unavailability of relief staff; I foresee staff shortages continuing to be a problem and this may cause some significant issues if we cannot safely teach and supervise all the children in school. Moving to online learning for some groups of children will be a last resort but cannot be ruled out.

Please do not hesitate to speak to us should you have any questions. Should there be any new directives from the DfE, I will contact you at the earliest opportunity to outline any amended arrangements.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in working together to ensure the safety and well-being of all those in our school community.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Suzanne MacDonald  
Executive Headteacher