

Dear Parents

Following an increase in the number of COVID cases locally, schools have been asked to review their outbreak management plans and risk assessment. Please read the information below for an update on the school's additional measures.

South West COVID-19 update

The South West Regional Schools Commission, South West UK Health Security Agency (formerly PHE) and the South West Directors of Public Health have together requested that schools review their outbreak management plan and risk assessments in light of rapidly rising COVID-19 infection rates. This is because the South West is experiencing the impact of national rising case rates and the impact of increased transmission arising from false negative PCR results. Case rates in our region have increased sharply against the national average and are expected to continue to rise.

The South West Directors of Public Health have identified that the greatest prevalence of COVID-19 is being seen in school age children and their families, and recommend that enhanced mitigations are implemented to reduce transmission, prevent school closures and maintain appropriate levels of education. They have recommended that schools invoke a precautionary set of measures and maintain these for 14 days post half term whilst they review the impact of social mixing after half term.

Our current protective measures

We will continue to maintain the following protective measures:

- Enhanced cleaning.
- Improved ventilation – heating will be set to ensure rooms are warm yet well ventilated.
- Regular handwashing.

Additional protective measures in school

In light of the growing infection rates, we will also **reduce the mixing between groups of children as much as possible by:**

- Maintaining year group bubbles for the duration of the school day.
- Ensuring that seating at lunchtime is socially distanced where more than one year group uses the hall. Continued enhanced cleaning and ventilation of the space. Lunchtime staff who work in the hall to wear a face covering if desired.
- Pausing in-person phase and whole school assemblies for the time being and moving to a virtual platform.
- Whilst extra-curricular clubs will continue, staff and agencies will sensitively manage groups to minimise mixing as much as possible. Choir practice to take place in a well ventilated room or outside where possible.

We will also aim to **reduce the number of close contacts** by:

- Holding virtual meetings for prospective September 2022 reception families with an option for a visit later in the term should infection rates fall and continue to do so.
- Staff meetings to return to a virtual platform. Staff are able to wear a mask in spaces outside of the classroom should they wish eg; corridors during breaks times.
- Holding virtual parents evenings and suspend any events where large gatherings are likely, for the first two weeks of the new half term. This will be reviewed at the end of the two week period and in line with advice.

In order to **minimise congestion and transmission** at drop off and pick up times:

- Please wear a face covering unless you are exempt.
- Pupils will be dismissed by the edge of the playground to enable families to socially distance on the school field. **Please leave the site as soon as you are able to.**

Protective measures in our community

In order to keep our community as safe as possible, we strongly urge:

- Everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated against COVID-19 if they haven't done so already.
- Everyone who is unwell to stay at home.
- Everyone to self-isolate and book a PCR test if they feel that there is a possibility that they have COVID-19.
- Everyone who is eligible to participate in twice weekly asymptomatic lateral flow testing.

Lateral Flow Testing

Please be aware that the South West Directors of public health are now recommending, due to the high prevalence of COVID-19, that lateral flow tests can be used by primary school aged children if they have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive on a PCR whilst they are awaiting the outcome of their own precautionary PCR test.

If you are at all concerned that you, or anyone in your household has COVID-19, please book a PCR test straight away.

Please remember that for most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness.

Please update us on PCR results

Please email notification@leckhampton.gloucs.sch.uk if your child has received a positive result for COVID-19 via a PCR test during the holidays. Please include the following information;

Child's name:

Child's date of birth:

Child's class:

Date of when symptomatic (Parents should inform if the child was asymptomatic at the time of test):

Date of PCR test:

Date of result of PCR test:

Date of return to school:

Where a child is isolating as a result of a positive COVID test or awaiting a result, please follow Oak Academy on Monday 1st November. Further information regarding remote learning will be issued to parents on Monday.

I understand that some parents will be disappointed to read that additional measures are being reinstated, particularly the return to virtual parents evenings in the second week of term. I should like to reassure you that the team will do all they can to retain the more familiar "feel" in school that the children have experienced since September. We are also incredibly keen to return to face to face events as soon as we possibly can.

I hope that these additional protective measures over the next two weeks will help us to reduce rates of infection, particularly in the run up to Christmas. I will share updates from the South West and Local Authority advisors as soon as we receive them.

Thank you for your support.

Sam Porter
Headteacher