



JUNIOR SCHOOL

Together we make a difference

Dobcroft Junior School

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Wednesday 6th October 2021

COVID19 - Update

Dear Parent and Carers,

I am writing to update you regarding where we stand as a school in terms of COVID cases.

We have been sorry to hear that some families have been displeased with the level of communication from school regarding cases recently. With regards to direct communication from school, we are unable to quantify the number of cases if they are below five (due to GDPR), however the *warn and inform* letter (which has been communicated at the correct times to the necessary pupils) has signalled when a class has reached the threshold number of cases.

We can only apologise to the frustrated families who feel that school should be doing more to handle the situation which is regularly being reported to us, regarding children of positive parents or siblings attending school or other children attending school whilst awaiting a PCR test, but this is very much out of our hands and due to DfE guidance We cannot enforce that children who do not have symptoms do not attend school, as much as we understand this frustration. We would like to reassure you that throughout the whole pandemic, we have absolutely tried our best to respond to official guidance thoroughly and communicate effectively.

Since September, we have continued to follow the most up to date DfE guidance as well as seeking the advice from Public Health when we have met any potential trigger points. Cases have been rising in our school steadily since the return in September and this afternoon, I have met with a representatives from Public Health and 2 governors for an Outbreak Management Control Meeting so that we can explore how we are currently operating and whether we can improve this in any way in response to a rising number of cases. This meeting has allowed us to fully reassess our school's situation with the leading professionals and to make sure we are doing all we can in school to manage the virus, as well as ensure we are communicating the correct information to the right parents in a timely manner. Following the meeting, we are reassured that our practice to date has been accurate and in line with guidance however, due to cases rising, we have now been advised to temporarily (for the next ten days) put some additional measures in place. Below captures the key points:

School Routines and Practice

- For the next ten days, staff will be encouraged to wear face coverings
- For the next ten days, we will increase social distancing by children playing in their individual classes outside
- For the next ten days, we will cease any intervention work or classes which bring together children from different classes (for example, 'Cornerstone' and 'Thrive' Nurture Groups)
- For the next ten days, we will increase the regularity of hygiene and cleaning routines in the classrooms
- For the next ten days, we must insist that that children do not bring in any items from home other than their necessities such as a water bottle and packed lunch
- For the next ten days, we will continue with remote assemblies and parent / carer meetings
- For the next ten days, we will continue eating in the dining hall in classes
- For the next ten days, after school clubs will continue but children will not be mixing across classes

Immediate Response to High Cases

- Following advice from Public Health, all pupils in **Year 3, 4 and 6** are **strongly advised to take a PCR test** (separate communication to follow if this impacts your child).

We cannot enforce that children stay at home whilst awaiting results however, if your child does not have symptoms and you wish to keep them at home whilst awaiting results, this absence will be authorised for this short period of time (ten days). Home learning is available on the school blog and please get in touch if you require paper copies.

- As per previous guidance, **any child who is displaying symptoms should not attend school and should get a PCR test**. As well as the three main symptoms (fever, continuous cough and loss of taste / smell) there are also other typical symptoms which will entitle parents to seek a PCR test. These symptoms include:
 - a sore throat
 - a runny nose
 - headaches
 - body aches
- If your child has a positive lateral flow test, please inform school and organise for a PCR test.
- Throughout this period of ten days, siblings of pupils who have a confirmed, positive PCR test will also be asked to take a PCR test and stay at home whilst they are awaiting results (separate communication to follow if this applies to your family).

We will also be communicating our current situation to Dobcroft Infant School and to DASH in order to support them in managing any positive cases in their setting which may link to our school. Public Health will be monitoring daily the situation in our school and advising us accordingly.

We would like to take this opportunity to reassure our parents and carers that we are doing all that we can to keep our school as safe as possible for our community and ask all parents and carers to actively work alongside us in implementing the above measures, particularly over the next ten days, in order to further improve safety for all.

Kind regards

Nicola Sexton – Head Teacher



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