

REF: HT/tlb

Monday 29th November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you and your families are well. I am writing with an update on the COVID-19 situation at Newquay Tretherras, following government announcements regarding the Omicron variant yesterday. Most of the guidance hasn't changed and the new measures that are being introduced are temporary and precautionary and will be reviewed in three weeks.

Face coverings

Face coverings help protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of COVID-19. **Face coverings should, once again, be worn by pupils, staff and adult visitors when moving around the school premises such as in corridors and communal areas.** We have plenty of face masks in school to support pupils and staff with this temporary measure.

Pupils should also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and dedicated transport to and from school. Face coverings do not need to be worn in classrooms or when outdoors.

Throughout the pandemic we have respected the rights of the individual. Some of our children are exempt from wearing face coverings and they will be supported in the usual way. Please contact the relevant Form Tutor or Head of Year if you feel your child is anxious and you would like to discuss this further.

Tracing close contacts and isolation

The current guidance on contact tracing and isolation remains in place - which means that close contacts should take PCR tests, but do not need to isolate unless they are over 18 and unvaccinated, or they have the new Omicron variant.

Close contacts in schools are now identified by NHS Test and Trace and education settings are not expected to undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact.

All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will be contacted directly and required to self-isolate immediately and asked to book a PCR test. They will be informed by the local health protection team or NHS Test and Trace if they fall into this category and will be asked to isolate for 10 days.

Control measures

In school, we will continue to:

- Ensure good hygiene and operational safety measures for everyone.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
- Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school. I hope most parents and carers will agree that a pupil with symptoms should not attend school, given the potential risk to other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.

Remote education

We will maintain our capacity to deliver high-quality remote education across this academic year. Where appropriate, we will support those pupils who need to self-isolate to work or learn from home if they are well enough to do so, by inviting pupils into their lessons remotely and/or setting work on Class Charts. We will work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments so that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can successfully access remote education.

Vaccination

The government advises all eligible staff and students aged 12 and over to take up the offer of the vaccine, including boosters.

Covid-19 testing during the holidays and on return in January 2022

The DfE would like to encourage staff and pupils to continue to test regularly over the Christmas holidays. We will be issuing more test kits to pupils before the end of term and encourage their use twice a week.

All secondary schools have been told to prepare to test pupils once they return to school after the Christmas holidays. We will update you soon on the arrangements for testing all Tretherras pupils during the week commencing 4th January 2022.

In the meantime, take very good care of yourselves.

Yours sincerely



MRS S FAIRBAIRN
Executive Headteacher