



Westfield Arts College



4th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

COVID guidance update

Happy new year to you all. I hope you've managed to enjoy at least some of the Christmas break with your family, although plans changed for many of us and others have been affected by positive COVID cases. We are really looking forward to seeing pupils tomorrow.

You will have seen on the news that new guidance for schools was issued by the DfE on 2nd January. Here are the things you need to know. There is also a summary of the key points at the end.

Testing of students and twice weekly testing

If your child is in Secondary (Year 7 and above) you should test them using a LFD test before they return to school tomorrow. If you haven't already done this please do it today. If they test positive they must not return to school tomorrow.

Secondary students will have an assisted LFD test on their return tomorrow. After that, both staff and pupils are strongly encouraged to take twice weekly LFD tests and report the results to the NHS website: <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>

Reporting a positive result

If your child tests positive for COVID using either a LFD or PCR test you should report this immediately using covidtesting@westfield.dorset.sch.uk with information about the date they tested positive, which test and when or if they became symptomatic. You should also phone the school office so that we can get some further details.

Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.

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

Since Wednesday 22 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.

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



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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](#).

Updated guidance on the use of face coverings in education settings

From Sunday 2 January, it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term. At Westfield we take a common sense approach to this and encourage pupils to wear face coverings, whilst being understanding that some are unable to or are exempt. Please work with your child to support them. We have been so proud of how well and sensibly most pupils have adjusted to the wearing of face coverings. Primary pupils who wish to wear a face covering at any time can do so.

We understand that this is a lot of information to take in and is often difficult to understand. The main points are:

- Your Secondary aged child should **do a LFD test before they return to school tomorrow**.
- Secondary pupils should **continue to take twice weekly LFD tests** and report results to the NHS.
- Positive COVID test results should be reported through the dedicated email address and by phone to the school office
- **Face coverings should be worn by Secondary aged pupils** (Year 7 and above) in communal areas and in classrooms (as far as is possible). Primary pupils who wish to wear a face covering at any time can do so.

If you have any questions regarding this revised guidance please do contact us for clarification. Everyone is doing their best to play their part in supporting us and we are grateful for your understanding and cooperation.

With best wishes

Seán Kretz
Head Teacher



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