



Ms Sue Lovecy, Head of School

1 April 2022

Dear parent/carer,

Living with Covid

This letter is being sent to all parents and carers of student in the 3-18 Education Trust

Following the government announcement in relation to managing Covid, which comes into effect today, all schools in our Trust are sharing this letter with their parents/carers.

'Living with Covid', published by the government in February, sets out plans to end all Covid-19 restrictions in England and to move to a strategy where vaccines and treatments are the first line of defence. A key part of this strategy is that, from 1 April 2022, the government will no longer provide free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic covid testing (both LFT and PCR) for the general public, except for a small number of at-risk groups, with details of this to be announced.

We are aware that some of our students live in Wales and Wales has also confirmed that it has stopped free PCR tests, except for at-risk groups from 28 March, but it will retain free lateral flow tests for symptomatic people until the end of June.

Therefore, as testing will be at a cost to our school community, and in light of significant media coverage about the cost of living increases, we will no longer be encouraging our school community to test and this requirement will need to be removed from our risk assessments.

As a Trust, we want to encourage school attendance in the context of the government's 'Living with Covid' strategy. Dame Jenny Harries, Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency, states:

"As we learn to live with Covid, we are focusing our testing provision on those at higher risk of serious outcomes from the virus, while encouraging people to keep following simple steps to help keep themselves and others safe".

Although testing and self-isolation is no longer a legal requirement, we do have a duty of care in relation to the health and safety of our school community and will still be taking measures to prevent the spread of Covid. The government has advised that all settings should have in place baseline infection prevention and control measures that will help to manage the spread of infection:

- Ensuring all eligible groups are enabled and supported to take up the offer of national vaccination programmes including COVID-19 and flu.
- Ensuring occupied spaces are well-ventilated and let fresh air in.
- Reinforcing good hygiene practices such as hand washing and cleaning.

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Covid presents a low risk of serious illness to most children and young people, and most of those who are fully vaccinated. This means we can begin to manage the virus like other respiratory infections.

The government has announced that children and young people who are unwell **and** have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to school when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend. Unless there are specific cases **agreed with the headteacher** that warrant resources being sent home, when our young people are too unwell to attend school, we will not be providing home or remote learning resources.

Those parents/carers of children who make their own choice to carry out a test, should take account of the government guidelines which are that children with a positive Covid-19 test result should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days, which is when they are most infectious.

If you have any questions please do contact me

Yours sincerely,

Ms S Lovecy
Head of School

Mr M J Barratt
CEO