

10<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your recent participation in our telephone parent teacher consultations. It is a good opportunity to discuss your child/ren's progress and development. Thank you for your many kind comments and positive feedback. It is appreciated.

### **Minimising Risk to the School Community**

As you may be aware, there has recently been a number of positive COVID-19 cases in our school and local community. As a result, we all need to continue to take care and remain vigilant. The health, safety and wellbeing of all our children, staff and wider community is of paramount importance. It is important that we remain considerate of vulnerable members of our community, as well as limiting the possibility of people becoming unwell. The school will endeavour to do all it can but it must be recognised that the school cannot eliminate all risk. **It is important that everyone with potential symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], however mild, do not attend school and arrange to have a PCR test.**

We would like to thank parents who have continued to follow the guidelines, including arranging for their child/ren to have PCR tests when recommended. Some children/people may be asymptotic and it is important that everyone arranges to have a PCR test when recommended. **If a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, it is important that all members of the household have a PCR test.** The guidelines indicate that your child can continue to come to school whilst they await the outcome of their PCR test result, unless they have symptoms. **In the event that your child is awaiting the outcome of a PCR test following a member of the household testing positive, you may wish to consider keeping your child at home until they receive a negative result, in order to reduce the risk of onward transmission. The school will provide home learning, whilst you await for a result or if you choose for your child to remain at home if a member of the household has tested positive.**

**Household siblings of confirmed cases are advised to take daily LFD tests [for primary aged children, this is at the discretion of the parent / guardian], including while awaiting their PCR test results and for the duration of the isolation period of their family member who has tested positive. Daily LFD tests are also recommended in the event that your child is identified as a close contact at school, once again at the discretion of the parent / guardian.**

**By acting as a community to try to limit onward transmission, we not only act to protect the wellbeing of everybody, but also look to ensure that children are able to continue to attend school.** Through taking steps to minimise onward transmission where we can (in the event that somebody in your family has symptoms of coronavirus, is awaiting the results of a PCR test, or tests positive for coronavirus), and by continuing to keep to the guidelines, we will be reducing the risk of onward transmission within the school and local community. In the event of teachers becoming unwell, there may not be sufficient safe staffing levels, which could result in the school needing to close or partially close for a period of time. The school will continue to work closely with Dorset Council and Public Health Dorset to inform its decision making. The school will keep parents updated with any decisions by parentmail as soon as it can. If in the event that children have to self-isolate at home or that our school has to be partially/closed, teaching staff will provide remote learning for each child/year group via Microsoft Teams.

**We are asking everyone to maintain the systems and protocols we have put in place on our school grounds, such as:**

- Utilising the one-way system at drop off/collection times including using the playground markings.
- Utilising the school staggered timings, including making every effort to keep to your allocated time slot and to leave the school grounds promptly after drop off/collection.
- Ensuring that parents do not come any further forward than the red line nearest to your child's year group entrance - this is to enable social distancing for both parents and staff.
- Considering the wearing of masks when it is busy (unless you have a pre-existing health condition).
- Avoiding congregating in groups on the school site
- Ensuring that only one person accompanies your child to school.

By taking these measures, we hope to reduce opportunities for the virus to transmit, with the aim of ensuring the wellbeing of all and enabling children to remain in school. Your continued support, understanding and cooperation is appreciated.

### **Staff News**

Congratulations to Mrs Lovett who has recently welcomed a beautiful baby daughter. Everyone is doing well and we wish them all the best for the future.

### **Vision Screening for Children in Early Years Foundation Stage**

A reminder that Vision Screening for Foundation Stage is due to take place on **Wednesday, 17th November 2021**, here at Rushcombe First School. For further details, please see the parentmail which was sent out on the 8<sup>th</sup> October. Please note, parents who *do not* want their child to have vision screening, need to register and opt out as soon as possible (minimum of 24 hours before the visit). Thank you.

### **Flu Immunisation**

The school has been advised that the scheduled flu immunisation for children, due to take place on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November at the school, has been postponed, due to staff shortages. The school has not yet been advised of a new date and will update families when the school has been updated.

### **Headlice**

Recently there have been a few cases of headlice in school. Please check your child's hair regularly for any signs of adult lice or their eggs. If you do find signs of headlice, you should treat your child's hair with the appropriate treatment and check the rest of your family for any infestations. Everyone's cooperation will reduce the frequency of cases in our school. Thank you.

### **Coronavirus [Covid-19] Guidance**

Please remember that if your child/ren test positive for symptoms of coronavirus infection [COVID-19], they will need to stay at home for 10 days from after the symptoms started. **Public Health Dorset advises that the day symptoms commenced or the positive test date, if there are no symptoms, is day 0 and a further 10 days of self-isolation is required. Your child/ren must not come in to school if they are displaying any symptoms of Covid 19, however mild.** If your child presents with symptoms of Covid-19 they will need to have a PCR test and receive a negative result before they can come back to school. The most common symptoms of coronavirus [COVID-19] are:

- **High temperature [feels hot to touch on the back or chest – a temperature of 37.6 degrees and above]**
- **New continuous cough [this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)]**
- **Loss or change to your normal sense of smell or taste [anosmia]**

More details of the symptoms can be found: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

**It is important that anyone with symptoms is tested.** If your child presents with Covid-19 symptoms, they will not be able to come to school and you should book a test. A PCR test can be booked or ordered online via NHS UK, using the following link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/> or by calling 119. Your household should isolate until you receive the test results giving the all clear.

**It is essential that the school is advised of the test outcome.** Where the child or staff member tests negative, they can return to school, if they are well enough.

If a child or a member of your household develops potential symptoms of Coronavirus you should continue to follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and [book a PCR test](#) for the child. **Rapid LFD tests should not be offered to individuals who develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, regardless of their age.**

If your child appears to present with any of these symptoms when they are in school, we will contact you and you will be advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection guidance](#).

You can seek further medical advice from NHS 111 and you can also use the Department for Education coronavirus helpline, which is available to answer questions about COVID-19 on T: 0800 046 8687. The helpline is open between 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday) and 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday).

#### **Confirmatory Polymerase Chain Reaction [PCR] Testing for Positive Lateral Flow Device [LFD] Tests**

Please note that **a confirmatory PCR test is required for anyone receiving a positive LFD test.** The PCR test should be booked immediately either [online](#) or by calling 119 and should be undertaken within 2 days. Anyone who had a positive LFD test result should self-isolate immediately in line with [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#) and while awaiting the PCR test result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the person can then end their self-isolation.

#### **Finally**

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us to sustain the health, safety and wellbeing of our whole school community.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Mahon  
Headteacher