

31st March 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Covid-19 Update 2022

I would like to provide an update on the arrangements following the changes in Government guidance 'Living with Covid' published on 30th March. The Government is clear that pupils and staff should be attending school, therefore all pupils and staff should attend their education setting.

Changes in the Living with Covid guidance includes:

Under the plans set out in the Government guidance free testing for the general public ends on 1st April. Free symptomatic testing will be provided for residential SEND schools only. Therefore SEN Schools and Area Resources Bases will not be receiving free symptomatic testing. Therefore staff will no longer be testing twice weekly as before.

From tomorrow (1 April), updated guidance advises staff and pupils with symptoms of a respiratory infection, including Covid-19, and a high temperature or who feel unwell, to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature. In other words, interpreting the Government guidance, Covid-19 will be treated like other illness and school absence policies will be applied from 1st April.

From 1st April, any pupil with a positive Covid-19 test result will be advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for three days, which is when they are most infectious. We are unable to provide risk mitigation and /or reassurance to clinically extremely vulnerable pupils due to the new guidance. If you do have individual concerns please contact your GP, health professional or discuss with your Head Teacher. We will require documentation from a health professional advising that your child is required to shield in order to authorise any absence associated with shielding.

The guidance will remain the same unless a different Covid -19 variant is identified and then Public Health will support schools and Area Resource Bases.

If pupils are currently absent with Covid-19 but are feeling well and do not have a temperature then they can come back to school from tomorrow (1st April).

To confirm, Trust Schools and Area Resource Bases will;

- Have a contingency plan in place for any local outbreaks or changes in restrictions.
- Communicate any changes in processes with parents, carers and staff.
- Ensure good respiratory hygiene for everyone by continuing to promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.

- Maintain enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated and deploy carbon dioxide monitors when the Trust receives the allocation from the Government.
- No longer be required to wear masks and class bubbles will cease to operate

Trust Schools and Area Resource Bases continue to liaise with Public Health England and to follow Government Guidance. **There is a lot of national information and communication messages which can be confusing and there is a lot of misinformation. It is important that if you are anxious or have any questions, concerns or queries, that you contact your school and the Head Teacher will answer any questions, provide support and / or guidance.**

We do understand the anxiety, recognising that this is a big shift in moving to 'Living with Covid' but we will continue to base all decisions on the guidance given.

Schools will provide regular, and when required, urgent updates should they receive any further updates or advice from the DFE or from our local Public Health teams and will inform you of any local action that may be required.

Please follow the usual procedures to report to school if your child will be absent.

Thank you for your ongoing support, patience and cooperation.

Yours sincerely



Guy Chappell
Director
The Special Partnership Trust