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January 2022

**WELCOME BACK – AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Dear families,

I do hope that you and your family were able to enjoy the Christmas holidays and join me in looking forward to the New Year and seeing more of the incredible things our pupils are capable of achieving in 2022.

I am sure that you are aware of the rising tide of COVID infections sweeping the nation. Like you, I have waited for news of any measures which the Government may implement at short notice in response to yet another surge in cases but these have not been forthcoming throughout the Christmas period and we therefore go into January 2022 with very high rates of infection locally and nationally. At Victoria, in common with all schools, we are likely to experience a rise in cases which may impact upon our day-to-day operations once again. In anticipation of that, I have attached the updated Outbreak Management Plan so that you may anticipate which aspects of our business may be impacted should we experience a high number of cases in the coming weeks.

In order to mitigate the impact of rising cases within the community, I am re-opening on Tuesday with the following measures in place for a two-week period: 

* No After School Clubs (though Breakfast Club will continue to be offered for all pupils)
* No face-to-face staff meetings or large gatherings (e.g., assemblies)
* Limited visitors into school
* The use of face masks by adults in communal areas

Happily, your children will continue to experience school life as they know it and will not necessarily notice the measures above which have been reintroduced. It is my full intention that we, once again, work closely together to navigate our way through another difficult period in the pandemic.

I also write to update you on the latest government guidance which you may need to know about.

First of all, arrangements for close contacts of COVID-19 have changed. All children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months and adults who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to self-isolate if they have been identified as a close contact of a person testing positive for COVID-19. Instead, they are advised to take a lateral flow test (LFT) test every day for 7 days instead and - provided the LFT is negative - can go about their business as usual.

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| ***Guidance for Isolation and close contacts***  *From 14 December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a LFD test\* every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result.*  *If someone tests positive using an LFD test, they should self-isolate and order a PCR test to confirm the result.*   * *If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days.* * *If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.*   *\*For primary students, LFD test kits are available to order online, or can be obtained through local pharmacies or community testing sites.* |

**Guidance for  COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result**

* You are still required to isolate for 10 days if you or your child have symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test result.
* You can end your isolation after 10 full days if your symptoms have gone, or if the only symptoms you have are a cough or anosmia, which can last for several weeks.
* If you still have a high temperature after 10 days or are otherwise unwell, stay at home and seek medical advice.

***You may be able to end your self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days if the following applies:***

* You can take a LFT on Day 6 after your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you did not have symptoms) and on Day 7.
* These tests should be taken at least 24 hours apart.
* 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.
* You should not take an LFT before the sixth day of your isolation period.
* You can only end your isolation period early after you have had 2 consecutive negative LFT results.
* You should stop testing after you have had 2 consecutive negative test results.
* This guidance also applies to children and young people who attend an education or childcare setting.
* *You should report your LFT results after taking each test.*

If you have any concerns or questions about your child’s return to school, please contact us to discuss this further. We would also ask that you update us as earl as possible re: any positive cases within your household which are going to impact upon your child’s return to school on Tuesday. You can email us via [info@vpaleeds.co.uk](mailto:info@vpaleeds.co.uk) or contact us by telephone on Tuesday morning.

We look forward to seeing you all Tuesday 4th January 2022 and continuing the fantastic year we have started.

Sam Bailey

Executive Principal /Head of School