**WESTGATE PRIMARY**

**SCHOOL**

**“United in Life-Long Learning”**

Head Teacher: Mr K Wright

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25 February 2022

**Information for You Regarding Changes to COVID Regulations**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you know with effect from yesterday, 24th February, many of the legal restrictions regarding COVID in England have now been lifted. This includes the requirement to isolate if testing positive for COVID. The use of facemasks in schools and other areas was also lifted with immediate effect last Monday. The country is now moving from being within a pandemic to living with COVID as an ‘endemic’ virus. This means it remains present in some form within the community in the same way a cold or flu virus would. As a result, we are going to continue with the following measures for the remainder of the term.

The government are still advising to stay at home if positive for a minimum of 5-days with negative tests on Days 5 and 6 meaning people are then no longer deemed contagious. So we are advising the following until the end of this term.

1. If your child shows symptoms of COVID, they can still access free PCR tests, and I believe free LFT / LFD tests are available in usual outlets.
2. If they test positive, we advise they stay off school for 5 days from the date of the test.
3. If they are negative with a LFT/LFD on the morning of Days 5 and 6, they can return on Day 6. If still positive, then repeat each day until 2 daily negative tests show, or you reach Day 10. They can still return on Day 11 if well enough.
4. There is no longer a need to test daily if your child is a close contact of a positive case.
5. We will still issue a letter to inform you of any positive cases but you will not be required to act on anything, just remain vigilant to your child’s own health.
6. Staff will also be adhering to the advice given by the government, although we have been also been instructed that schools can longer order bulk LFT tests for staff.

These are now guidelines rather than legal requirements, but the aim of this is to do the best we can to keep things running smoothly as we test the impact of changes to the end of term. We are hoping that the downward trends seen in recent weeks continue and that we can return to a more normal life in school after Easter. This includes the re-introduction of events that parents and carers can attend within school; something we know a larger number of younger children’s parents and carers have not yet experienced.

You will also notice that we are planning more social events for the children including events such as discos as we lead to the end of term; the York visit for Year 5 children; the Isle of Man visit for Year 6 and the planning of the Isle of Man visit in September for next year’s Year 6 pupils. Cautious and careful steps towards a growing confidence in living as normally as we can, is bound to help us all as we learn to live with COVID.

You have all been so fantastic over the last two years; dealing with many personal and community-wide challenges. Your continued support in the coming weeks will help keep the virus under control which will reduce the risk of staff sickness and therefore potential disruption to your child’s learning.

Thank you again.

Yours sincerely,

  

Keith Wright

Head Teacher

Westgate Primary School