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Friday 14th May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Covid Update

As I'm sure you are aware some more of the national Covid restrictions will be lifted from Monday 17th May. Whilst this is a great news as it is another sign that the situation is getting better we do need to remember we are still in the midst of a global pandemic and the Covid threat has not gone away.

Ahead of Monday the DfE has produced updated guidance for schools. As far as schools go, the changes really only affect secondary schools at this point. Primary schools still need to maintain all the measures we currently have in place and we still need to remain as vigilant and cautious as ever. At Dent because we are a small school we are operating as one bubble so we need to avoid any cases. A single positive case would cause the school to close and for us to have to revert to remote learning again; of course we don't want that to happen!

We will continue to err on the side of caution with any illness and particularly the main three Covid symptoms which are;

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new and / or 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)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

However, we know there are many more symptoms that children can display if they have Covid so we need to be very careful with any illnesses. If you are asked to collect your child from school for any reason please make sure you do this as a matter of urgency; we do not have enough staff in school to supervise children who may need to be isolated from others for whatever reason.

As a school, staff may need to ask families to go for PCR testing. We do not like doing this but we do need to do to follow the strict guidance from the DfE and CCC to keep our communities safe. Please support and respect school staff when they have to take these difficult decisions.

It is fantastic that everyone can now access regular Lateral Flow home testing. This is just one more measure we can all take to prevent the spread of Covid and we thank everyone who is taking

part in regular testing. Whilst we know they aren't perfect, the main purpose of Lateral Flow tests is to pick up asymptomatic people who may or may not go on to develop symptoms. This helps the unknowing spread of Covid. If a person (child or adult) develops any of the symptoms of Covid **they must book a PCR test.** There has been an increase in well-meaning people using Lateral Flow home testing when a person has potential symptoms. **If you or someone in your family develops any symptoms or you are in any doubt please book a PCR test immediately do not use a Lateral Flow test, these will not give an accurate enough result and are not enough for a child to then attend school.** If you think you need to do a LFD test because someone is unwell, please stop and book a PCR test, much better to have the reassurance of a negative and a little inconvenience rather than putting others at risk.

Please enjoy the freedoms that Monday will bring but please, please be sensible and follow the rules so we all stay safe and we don't put all the hard work of the last few difficult months in jeopardy.

If you have any questions or in any doubt about what to do please contact school, although not medical professionals we have lots of official guidance which tells us what to do. We will always do our best to help.

Take care



Emma Pomfret
Executive Headteacher