



# Downs View

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! I hope you have had a relaxing holiday and didn't have your plans disrupted too much by Covid. I hope anyone who has been ill over the holidays is recovering well. We are looking forward to welcoming all the students back tomorrow and I wanted to update you on the changes to the guidance around Covid.

The guidance around symptoms remains the same, if your young person is unwell and displaying any of the key symptoms for Covid (details below) then please isolate them and book a PCR test for them to confirm.

## **Positive Covid Test**

The 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances. Individuals can now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 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 and return to school/college from day 8. If either of your LFD tests are positive or you are unvaccinated (for over 18's) then you need to isolate for the full 10 days.

## **Lateral Flow Device Testing (LFD)**

If your young person is able to tolerate it then please do a LFD test before they return to school or college on Tuesday.

## **Close Contacts**

We will let you know if your young person is a close contact for a positive case at school or college. We would advise you to do a daily LFD test for 7 days after the contact if your young person is able to tolerate it. If your young person is over 18 years and 6 months and is unvaccinated then they will need to isolate for 10 days following a close contact.

The current infection rate in the city is very high and this will impact on our staffing levels over the next few weeks. This may mean that we will not be able to fully open classes. We will try to give you as much notice as possible if that is the case. If you know that your young person is going to be absent then please let us know as soon as you can so that we can arrange staffing accordingly.

I appreciate that this continues to be a challenging time for families and I want to reassure you that we are doing all that we can to keep school and college as safe as possible. Please do email me if you have any questions or concerns. I hope any pupils, staff or family members who are ill make a speedy recovery.

Best Wishes

*Vanessa*

Vanessa Hickey  
Executive Headteacher



## **Covid Symptoms**

If your child has any of the key symptoms of Covid it is really important that they remain at home until they have had a PCR test. If they are unable to access the test then they will need to isolate for 10 days. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for a PCR test (the normally available test type) and this can be arranged via <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>. If you have problems or cannot use the online service, call 119. Lines are open 7am to 11pm.

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- A 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)
- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.