



# Downs View

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26<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Covid Update

We are currently experiencing a very high number of Covid cases on the school site. The case numbers are the highest that they have been throughout the whole pandemic and we are seeing a high level of reinfection with staff and pupils. This is having a huge impact on pupils as we have a lot of staff absent and this leaves us unable to safely staff all classes.

I would like to thank the families that have been affected by this and I do understand the additional pressure that this puts on you all. I appreciate how difficult it is when pupils are asked to stay at home, so I thought it would be useful to share our decision making process with you.

On a daily basis we review each class as to whether we have staff that can support that class. We have a number of supply staff that are familiar with our pupils so we always try to cover any staffing gaps with them. Once we have Covid cases within a class we have seen that it spreads quickly though the class with a high level of infection. This means that we cannot move staff into that class to cover as they would be exposed to the infection which in turn would lead to them being absent from work. This does mean that some classes are affected more than others.

If we are unable to fully staff a class safely then we will either close the class or ask some pupils to stay at home. We will try to do this equitably but as all of our pupils have different needs this affects the support they need. If we have a lot of unfamiliar adults in a class this often leads to an increase in behaviour incidents which impacts on the whole class.

We are continuing to use a number of measures to try and stop Covid spreading on site. Face masks are being worn in communal areas, pupils are not mixing inside and we are keeping the building ventilated. It is also really important that everyone remains vigilant around symptoms. If your child will tolerate it then please use LFD tests twice a week. We can supply the test kits if you need them.

I really appreciate that we have been living in a pandemic for a long time now and this is impacting on families and on staff. I remain hopeful that we are reaching the end of this peak and that we will be able to restart many of the curriculum opportunities that have been stopped due to Covid.

I would like to wish anyone who is currently unwell a speedy recovery. Please do contact me if you have any questions.

Best Wishes,

*Vanessa*

Vanessa Hickey  
Executive Headteacher

