

30th November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID-19 Update

I am writing to provide an update on the current situation with COVID-19 at New Forest School.

We have enjoyed a settled and relatively COVID free start to this half term. However, in the last couple of days we have had a small number of positive cases reported.

Presently, our number of positive cases is low and spread across our 3 school sites. As such it is presently causing minimal impact.

Alongside this, we have been tracking the updated guidance from the Government and Department for Education as well as keeping abreast of developments with the new Omicron Variant.

We are also aware of local schools who are starting to be severely impacted by rising numbers.

As a response to both the current national and local situation as well as our own positive case numbers, we have stepped up measures within New Forest School to try and prevent any further impact or disruption in the lead up to Christmas.

Our updated COVID-19 Measures are currently as follows:

1. All staff at New Forest School will wear Type IIR Face Masks unless lone working in a classroom or office.
2. All staff at New Forest School to complete daily lateral flow tests before arrival at work.
3. Students are encouraged to complete Lateral Flow Tests twice a week. If students are a close contact, we will ask them to test daily where possible.
4. Students will be encouraged to wear face masks where they are able to do so.
5. Staff will maintain hand hygiene and 'catch it, bin it, kill it' routines and encourage all students to follow the example modelled by staff.
6. All staff will maintain clean down of shared resources and classroom desks/door handles etc between each lesson and at the end of the school day.

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7. Wherever possible, meetings to be held on Microsoft Teams, particularly meetings involving staff from other school sites or external professional. Where onsite meetings are held attendees will observe the two-metre social distancing guidance.
8. External visitors will only attend site where necessary – these visits will be held outside of hours when students are on site wherever possible.
9. Any external visitors or contractors will wear Type IIR face masks.
10. All school sites will receive antibacterial fogging twice a week as a precautionary measure. Each school site will be made aware of the days and staff should ensure all work surfaces are as clear as possible to aid this process.

As always, I am very grateful for the continued support of all parents/carers with the regular lateral flow testing you are undertaking at home. The early identification of possible cases is vital in preventing transmission within the school.

If any parent/carer requires additional test kits, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

If we see case numbers rise, we will adopt further measures from our Outbreak Management Plan to maximise safety and minimise disruption as much as possible.

COVID-19 Vaccinations

I recently surveyed parents/carers regarding both COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations as we had finally received contact from the Immunisation Service.

Frustratingly, despite significant contact from the Head of our Health & Well Being Team, we have still not been able to secure a date for these to take place.

For parents/carers who are keen for their child to receive the COVID-19 Vaccination I would encourage you to book appointments via the following NHS Website:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>

We will continue to pursue the Immunisation Team for a date for on-site vaccinations for our students, however it seems unlikely this will be before the Christmas Holidays.

Onsite COVID-19 Testing - January

All schools have been asked to provide on-site COVID-19 testing of students when they return from the Christmas Holidays. Students who consent to being tested are required to be on-site tested twice by the school with results recorded on the NHS Testing Website.

We are already looking at plans to complete this and ensuring we have sufficient stock of both tests and the required PPE. We will complete these tests during the first week back.

Further details will be shared closer to the time, however our intention is for the first test to be completed on the first day of term, when students first arrive at school.

Final Thoughts

Can I once again thank all parents and carers for your continued, superb support of the New Forest School community, particularly with the home testing and swift responses to booking PCR tests when required. Hopefully our additional measures can prevent further disruption in the lead up to Christmas and ensure students are able to enjoy the final weeks of the term.

Kindest regards,



Duncan Smith
Headteacher