



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all well, and following various announcements this weekend, please see the resulting updates below:

COVID Precautions

On Saturday 27th November, the Prime Minister [announced](#) new temporary measures following the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the UK. As a school we already have all of these measures in place due to the increased case numbers before half term. Although our numbers have dropped considerably, we will continue to wear face masks when in any building up until we break up for Christmas. The new guidelines state that all staff, students and visitors are required to wear face coverings in all communal areas. We will also keep to students wearing them in lessons. We will also continue to show assemblies on-line, have an extended tutor time each morning rather than a morning welcome and continue to ask staff and students to Lateral Flow Test every Monday and Thursday.

Contact Tracing

The [current guidance on contact tracing and isolation](#) remains in place. In addition to these, any suspected or confirmed close contacts of the Omicron variant will be asked to isolate for 10 days regardless of vaccination status or age. We are told this will be led by the National Test and Trace service and not be led by the school.

LfT Testing January

On Friday we received a message from the DfE confirming that schools are going to be required to Lateral Flow Test students on return in January. The message said the following:

'We would like all secondary schools to prepare to test their pupils once on-site on return in January. We understand that this is a significant additional ask but testing continues to play a vital role in keeping COVID-19 out of schools. Testing all pupils in school boosts testing participation and will help reduce transmission after a period of social mixing over the school holidays'

Once we confirm the planning and timings of the tests we will let you know.

Carol Concert

The Government have now released specific information about Christmas Concerts and Nativity plays and has confirmed they are allowed to take place 'live' and in person with precautions. We will therefore continue to plan for our traditional Christmas Carol Service which takes place on Wednesday 15th December at 7pm in Holy Trinity Church. Tickets are free and available from the



school reception or the music department. The guidance for Christmas events can be read here: [Christmas Events in Schools](#)

Dr Dominique Thompson – How to support the mental health of your child.

On Thursday 3 February from 6.30 pm we have Dr Dominique Thompson giving a talk on how best to support children, particularly since lockdown. Dominique has visited us many times before and is an award-winning GP, young people's mental health and parenting support expert, TEDx speaker, author and educator, with two decades of clinical experience. She is co-author of *How to Grow a Grown Up* (Penguin Random House), a book written to support parents to raise independent and resilient young people in the 21st century. Dr Thompson will be visiting the school to talk primarily to parents. This is an annual event and she comes highly recommended by those parents and staff that have heard Dr Thompson speak before! Check out the www.growingagrownup.com website to find out more.

Morning Expectations

Can I ask that you remind your children of the importance of arriving at school by 8:30am each morning? Tutor time starts at 8:35am and it is important that students are present to receive their registration mark. If students are late they will have to enter through the main entrance and sign in either with Miss Kilford at the front gate or in reception. This will also be followed by a lunchtime detention.

Finally

I would like to thank you for your continued support. You may be aware through your children that we currently have 6 members of staff isolating with Covid. As a school we will continue to do all we can to ensure all students continue to receive specialist teaching, however we know there have been some lessons recently covered by supply staff. Please be assured that we are doing everything we can to ensure any disruption to learning is limited.

As always, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me,

Kind regards,

Paul Skipp
Headteacher