

Essex County Council

## Dedham Church of England Primary School

Parsons Field, Dedham, Colchester, Essex CO7 6BZ

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8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear families of Dedham Church of England Primary School,

As we are finding our way through new government guidelines for responding to COVID19 in school settings, I thought it would be useful to give some further clarification regarding responding to a positive test, contact tracing and when to self-isolate.

You will be pleased to hear that there have been no further positive cases of COVID19 in school since my earlier communications this week. Firstly, I must apologise for stating that all of our pupils who tested positive were identified due to wider family lateral flow testing. In fact, of the four cases identified in our school, three were as a result of wider family testing and one through a PCR test after being identified as a close contact. Today, I have been in contact with all of our families affected by COVID19 this week and you will be pleased to hear that everyone remains well.

As you know, only NHS Test and Trace will undertake contact tracing and may contact you to inform you that your child has been identified as a close contact. In line with the latest government guidelines that were released in August 2021, **identified close contacts who are under 18 years and 6 months of age, do not need to self-isolate.** Instead, they are advised to get a COVID19 PCR test.

If your child is identified as a close contact by NHS Test and Trace your child should continue attending school and you should arrange for them to have a PCR COVID19 test. **They should continue to attend school whilst awaiting the outcome of this test.** Only if this test is positive or your child is displaying one of the three COVID19 symptoms do they need to stay at home and self-isolate.

### To clarify, your child should only self-isolate in the following circumstances:

- They have tested positive for COVID19 using a PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test. They should stay at home for the 10-day isolation period and we will arrange remote education so that they can continue their learning, if they are well enough to do so.
- They have tested positive for COVID19 using an LFD (rapid lateral flow) test. They need to stay at home, self-isolate and take a confirmatory PCR test. If the outcome is negative and they are well they should return to school. If the outcome is positive they should stay at home for the 10-day isolation period and we will arrange remote education so that they can continue their learning, if they are well enough to do so.
- They are symptomatic displaying one of the three COVID19 symptoms. They need to stay at home, self-isolate and are advised take a PCR test.



Remote education will not be extended to children who are absent for other reasons.

We will continue to review our risk assessment and outbreak management plan and adhere to the protective measures in place at school. These measures include hygiene and cleaning measures and keeping spaces well ventilated.

### **What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID19**

If your child develops symptoms of COVID19, they must not come to school and should remain at home for at least **10 days** from the day after their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms should seek a test and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

Household members no longer need to isolate if they are under 18 years 6 months of age or are double vaccinated.

Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The 10-day period starts from the day after the first person in the house became ill.

### **Symptoms**

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID19) are recent onset of:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

### **Self-isolation guidance**

Close contacts and household members of a positive case no longer need to self-isolate if any of the following applies:

- They're fully vaccinated
- They're below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- They've taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID19 vaccine trial
- They're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
- Children under 5 years old who are identified as close contacts will only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household

See link for further information on guidance for households.

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### **How to stop COVID19 spreading**

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19

*Do*

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

### **Further Information**

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Larner".

Mr David Larner

Headteacher



The Church of England  
in Essex and East London  
Diocese of Chelmsford

