

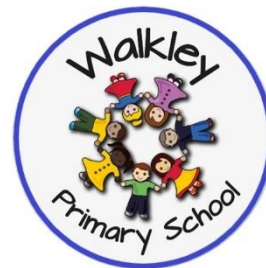
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'Enjoyment, Achievement and Learning for life...'

7th January 2022

Covid – 19 Update: Essential information for Parents

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year to you all. It has been a wonderful start to the term.

The latest updates from Gov.uk, alongside information provided by the DFE, Sheffield City Council and Public Health can feel overwhelming. It is our aim to give as much clarity to the current situation in our school community and the impact for school due to the rising levels of the Omicron variant. It is the aim of Senior Leaders in school to maintain current practice in school with face to face teaching for all pupils.

The government will continue to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. Rising case numbers create implications for staffing and like many other sectors of work, education will be affected. However, difficult though we expect things to become this month, in the medium to long term things hopefully look better. The hard work and diligence of the Walkley staff will ensure that we maintain crucial face to face provision for our pupils and also, as at the outset of the pandemic, play our part in allowing our families to carry out the crucial roles in society.

Covid Guidance

Please visit our **COVID policy and guidance section** on the school website. You can find [this here](#) in the section **Key Information**. This may be helpful to you and provide you with more clarity regarding any information about the latest guidance and procedures.

The following are answers to questions raised by some of our parents that we hope will be useful:

1. What are your control measures?

These remain the same with frequent and thorough hand cleaning now regular practice. Children will continue to use sanitiser on entrance to the school and throughout the day and we will ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. There will be a cleaning team on site to maintain levels of hygiene and cleanliness throughout the day. Our health and hygiene routines will remain in place.

2. What hygiene measures will be in place to keep my child safe?

We will continue to:

- Ensure that sufficient handwashing facilities are available. Where a sink is not nearby, we will provide hand sanitiser in classrooms and other learning environments.

- Clean surfaces that children and young people are touching, such as toys, books, desks, chairs, doors, sinks, toilets, light switches, bannisters, more regularly than normal.
- Ensure that all adults and children frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly.
- Ensure that all adults and children clean their hands-on arrival at the setting, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing.
- Ensure that all adults and children are encouraged not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose
- Ensure that all adults and children use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze and use bins with lids for tissue waste ('catch it, bin it, kill it').
- Ensure that help is available for children and young people who have trouble cleaning their hands independently.
- Consider how to encourage young children to learn and practise these habits through games, songs and repetition.
- Ensure that bins with lids for tissues are emptied throughout the day.
- Where possible, ensure all spaces are well ventilated using natural ventilation (opening windows) or ventilation units.
- Prop doors open, where safe to do so (bearing in mind fire safety and safeguarding), to limit use of door handles and aid ventilation.

3. Tracing close contacts and isolation

Close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases. Since 16th August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old are no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take daily lateral flow device (LFD) tests for 7 days. We would encourage all individuals to test if advised to so.

Schools will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is an outbreak in a setting or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

4. What happens if my child shows symptoms

When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test, pupils, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on when to self-isolate and what to do. They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine). If anyone in our school develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, we will send them home and they should follow public health advice. If a pupil is awaiting collection, they should be collected from the Main Office.

5. What are the changes to self-isolation period for the individuals who test positive for Covid-19?

Since Wednesday 22 December, 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, unless you cannot test for any reason.

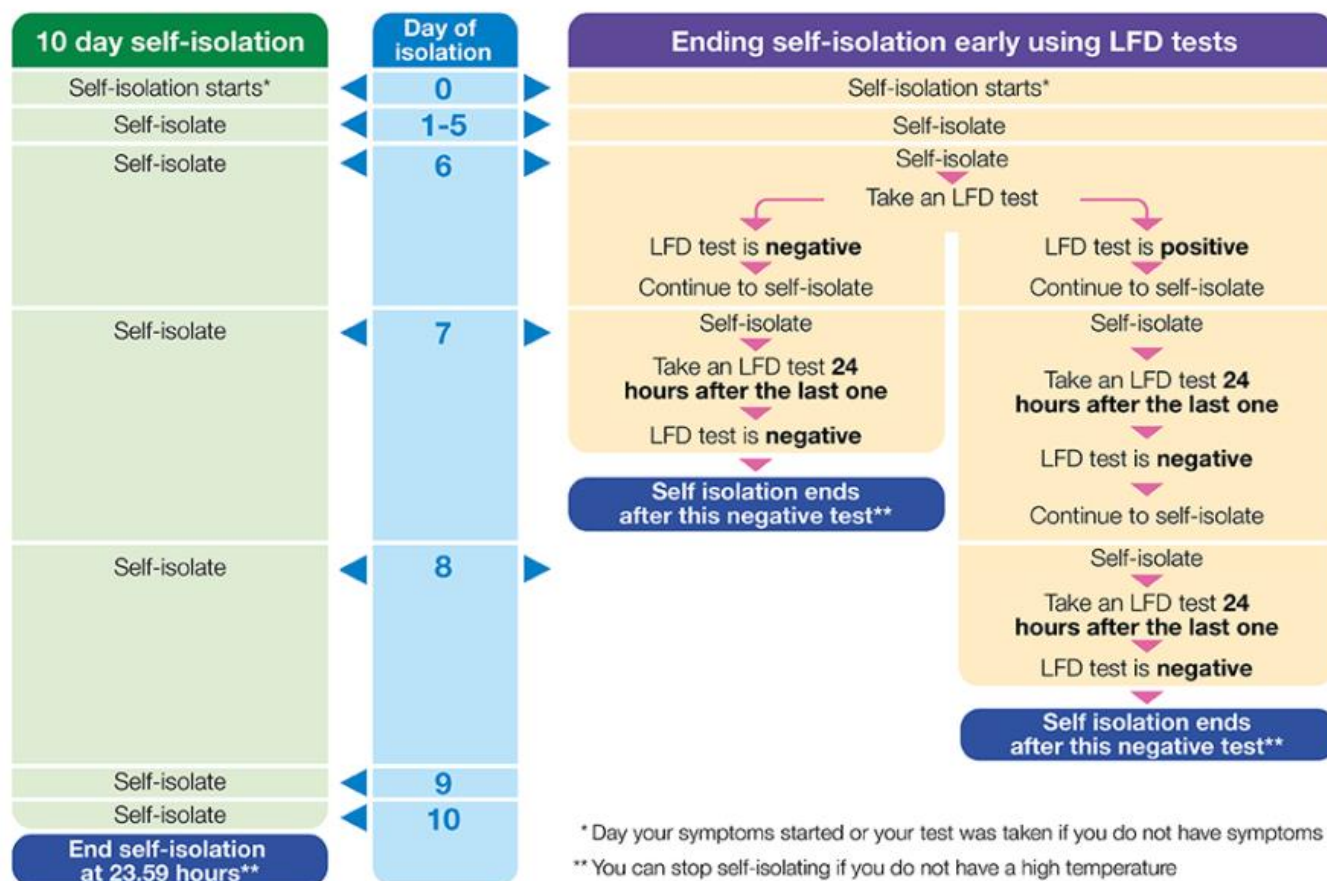
Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be

taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. 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.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

Further information, including examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms, is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#)

Examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result



6. [Will we return to class bubbles?](#)

No, this is not the current advice for schools. We will continue to use the dining room for lunch, PE, Breakfast Club and After School Club. Children will play together at break and lunchtimes outside. We will monitor cases in school and with the advice of Sheffield Public Health make recommended changes to this if so advised.

7. [What Continuity Measures are in place to manage significant staff absence?](#)

Staff continue to test twice weekly using LFDs.

- In the event of the expected increase in staff absence over the coming weeks, we will maintain face to face teaching by deploying the necessary strategy for staffing. This could involve deploying the continuity teacher in class; using a supply teacher in class; requesting use of teachers' Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time to provide cover across classes; using cohort teaching (one class teacher delivering the teaching in two cohort classes with support from 1 or 2 Teaching

Assistants) or Teaching Assistants working together to provide the teaching and learning within a class. All these measures will be explored before considering class closures.

- There may be times when we are short staffed in the office team, Pastoral, Lunchtime and Cleaning teams and our Senior leaders are deployed in different roles. At these times, telephone calls and emails may take a little longer than normal to be responded to. In this eventuality, thank you for bearing with us.

8. Will there still be staggered drop off and pick uptimes?

The procedures set up before Christmas will continue. All doors open at 8:40am. F2 and Y1 pupils can be collected between 3:00pm and 3:10pm from their class doors and 2 groups of KS2 pupils are released to parents with a staggered 5 minute interval at 3:10pm and 3:15pm

9. Can I come to office?

If there is a need to come to the office, we suggest that you ring first to secure an agreed appointment time. This ensures that only one person will be in the entrance at a time, therefore minimizing numbers and reduce waiting time for your query to be answered. If calling into the office at drop off or pick up times, please do your best to maintain 2m social distancing inside the building. There is sanitiser available as you enter through the main door and you will need to buzz the main office for attention to access your appointment. Regarding medication requirements for pupils in school, the process will be to ring to confirm a time to bring the medicine to the school office. This way all the relevant paperwork will be completed on your arrival. We will then take the medication to your child's class.

10. Are there any changes to the school opening times?

There is no change to the times for opening gates (8:40am and 3:00pm). The school gates will be locked at 9.00 am after drop off and again at 3.30 pm at the end of the school day. This is to reduce the safeguarding and security risk to children and staff on site. In the event of you arriving late you must go to the Main Office. Your child can sign in at Reception and be added to the register. Your child will then be collected and taken into class. If you need to take your child to a medical appointment please inform the office by phone so that arrangements can be made in advance.

11. Does the school have sufficient ventilation?

Ventilation remains a key strategy for reducing the spread of coronavirus. The new building provides us with a superb internal ventilation system which combined with the top windows of each classroom which are open all day, helps us to reduce the transmission risk in each class.

12. Will Lunchtimes change?

These will continue to be staggered for year groups in the hall. **We remind parents that the school has a 'no nut' policy as we have children with allergies.**

13. How do I make payments?

We request that as little money as possible is exchanged on the school site and that you use the online school payment system [Pay360 Education Payments](#) as we continue in our attempts to become a cashless school. There will be exceptions when cash may be required for small amounts, such as a donation for Breakfast Club or a charity. Obviously, some parents/carers may choose not to use the Pay360 facility and may have concerns about making payments. Please contact Mrs Homer and/or Mr. Clements for further advice or speak to Mrs. Prigmore or Mrs. Amian in the School Office.

14. Music lessons

During the Autumn term, Year 2 pupils began their recorder lessons, Year 3 pupils violin lessons and Year 4 percussion lessons as well as Pathways lessons for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, alongside individual lessons. These lessons will continue to be delivered in school by Sheffield Music Hub. It may be that Sheffield Music Hub have issues with staffing. If this affects the provision in school and any of the pathways or individual lessons have to be postponed we will notify you of this.

15. Will my child be expected to share resources, such as pens and pencils?

Classroom-based resources like books and games can be used and shared within a group and we will clean them regularly, as we do for frequently touched surfaces. Each child uses their own personal learning zippy bag which will be kept on their table. It includes a pencil or handwriting pen; a ruler; a whiteboard marker pen and white board; a glue stick; and a red, orange and green crayon to complete their own traffic light assessments. Also shared resources – such as books and games, will continue to be used.

16. Visits out and Residential

Visits, trips, and residential as well as visitors into school will continue in the Spring Term. It is our policy for children to have at least three different experiences during the academic year. For Years 2, 4 and 6 this includes a Residential experience. It is our intention to complete the residential trips in the Spring term. If however, the school (due to staffing shortages in the residential team) or the YHA or Kingswood (residential providers) cannot fulfil the residential trip because they cannot comply with the agreed Risk assessments in place, you will be notified at the earliest opportunity. We will issue full refunds if the trips cannot go ahead.

17. Pupil Well Being and support

Some pupils may continue to experience a variety of emotions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as anxiety or stress. You can access useful links and sources of support on promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools on our website click [here](#).

18. Does my child have to attend?

The Government has indicated that they expect all pupils to return to school and therefore the previous system of Walkley Primary School monitoring and challenging non - attendance will continue including the fining system for persistent absence. Although we will be looking at an expected attendance of 97%, we are conscious of the expected levels of Coronavirus in the community and the impact this will have on our parents and pupils. School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.

19. How will you hold assemblies?

Assemblies will continue to be conducted virtually via Google meet. We still look forward for the day we can reestablish assemblies in the hall and welcome parents to join us for our Golden Book assemblies on Friday mornings.

20. Swimming lessons

Swimming lessons begin for Charlies class on 7th February. Mr. Earl will provide more details to Charlie class parents next week.

21. PE Lessons

Pupils will need outdoor PE kit suitable for cold and rainy conditions and are asked to come to school dressed for PE. The outdoor playgrounds, dance studio and hall will be used for PE lessons.

22. Forest school timetable

Forest school will continue on the same basis of each class receiving a three day allocation. You will receive a copy of the Spring term timetable in the school Newsletter on 7th January. On forest school days children will be asked to come suitably dressed.

23. Will staff and children wear masks?

In line with previous guidance, the current recommendation is that adults wear face coverings indoors when in communal areas. Walkley staff will continue to wear face coverings when entering other classrooms and at drop off and pick up times when coming into contact with more people. Some staff may also choose to wear face coverings in the classroom setting.

24. Will my child need to wear a school uniform?

Yes. Children should come to school in our recommended school uniform. For guidance see [here](#). Pupils should continue to wear appropriate PE kit in school colours on their PE days.

25. Are Breakfast club and After School club still open?

Yes. Breakfast Club is free and has a choice of hot and cold breakfasts. Breakfast is served from 8 a.m. until 8.25 a.m. For safeguarding and Health and Safety reasons **no cars are allowed onto the school site. They must be parked on the road and pupils accompanied by an adult to the Breakfast Club entrance.**

26. Will extra-curricular clubs run (football club, dance club etc.)?

Yoga Club and Dance Clubs have run throughout the Autumn term. In addition to these, Cheerleading club will begin this week for year 3 to 6.

27. Admitting children into school

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a pupil with symptoms should not attend the school, given the potential risk to others. If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending school, we can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in our reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. Our decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

28. How can I speak to the class teacher?

You can contact your child's class teacher through Tapestry (EYFS) or, you can email or phone the office on enquiries@walkley.sheffield.sch.uk who will then pass the message on. Appointments can be made by mutual agreement.

29. What should my child bring to school each day?

Your child can bring a lunch box, water bottle, coat and a home lending book or book bag. They will wear their PE kit on PE days and Forest School clothing on Forest School days.

30. Can I bring birthday cake into school to celebrate my child's birthday?

Individually wrapped sweets and cakes can be brought into school. Remember we have a 'no nuts' rule. Contents must be displayed as we have many children with allergies.

Yours Faithfully

Mr Wallis

Acting Headteacher