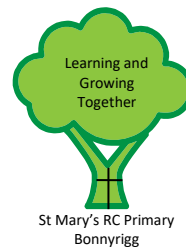


ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Rosewell Road
Bonnyrigg EH19 3HL
Midlothian
Tel: 0131 271 4690

EDUCATION
Head Teacher
Mrs Liz Laird
stmarys_ps@midlothian.gov.uk
<http://stmarys.mgfl.net>
twitter@stmarysrcps



Midlothian



10th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you had a relaxing and Covid free Christmas break and on behalf of the Team at St Mary's, I extend our best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. Also on behalf of the staff, thank you for the many gifts, treats and cards sent in before the Christmas break which were very much appreciated.

As you may be aware COVID Guidance from the Scottish Government continues to be reviewed and updated guidance was published on Wednesday 5 January. Therefore, I wanted to provide you with the fullest updates, information and reassurance around the measures we are taking at St Mary's to ensure the safety and health of all our staff and children.

In light of the Omicron variant, safety mitigations that were already in place will continue to be strictly followed and some measures that were previously relaxed are being reintroduced. The importance of regular LFD testing for staff (and secondary pupils) has been and continues to be stressed throughout and especially before our return to school.

KEY CHANGES INCLUDE:

- a strengthened approach to minimising contacts, primarily through the reintroduction of groupings where practical (1 class = 1 group)
- a strengthened approach to self-isolation for household contacts of positive cases
- tightened restrictions on school visitors
- updated guidance on regular ventilation and CO2 monitoring
- measures aimed at increasing the uptake of regular asymptomatic testing
- an update to guidance on school visits and trips
- a requirement for schools and local authorities to provide essential support for particular groups, including vulnerable children and young people, in the event of temporary school closures at a local level

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON COVID 19 (OMICRON) ISOLATION PERIOD

The First Minister made a statement to Parliament on 5 January setting out changes to the approach to self-isolation that apply across society from 6 January.

In summary, positive cases are advised to self-isolate for 10 days. However, if the individual returns two consecutive negative LFD tests on day 6 and day 7, they may end isolation before the end of the 10 day period if they have no fever. This guidance for cases also applies to those under five years old. Non-symptomatic contacts, including household contacts, needn't isolate or get a PCR if fully vaccinated (2 doses and booster) or under 18yrs 4mths old. Instead, they should take 7 days of lateral flow tests and report results – only isolating where a LFD result is positive.

If we are made aware of a positive case in St Mary's, we will send out a letter to the relevant group(s) of parents/carers of low risk contacts as soon as possible. This letter will give further guidance and information. High risk contacts will be contacted by the Health Protection Team.

If a pupil attends the school with symptoms of cough and/or high temperature, you will be contacted to collect them. If they need to wait to be collected by their parent or carer, they will be isolated in a private, well ventilated room/area. Isolation rooms will be cleaned after use in line with National Guidance. Siblings will also be sent home to complete LFD test.

School staff will be vigilant to any potential signs of Covid-19 and will always err on the side of caution in contacting parents and carers.

For St Mary's Primary and ELC the following mitigations will continue to apply:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>ARRIVAL TO AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL</p> | <p>NO CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery parents maintain a distance at the Nursery entrance when dropping off and collecting. • A member of school staff will be in the playground to supervise children from 8.45am – please do not send the children before this time. • P1 and P2 parents only – 1 adult per family – can come into the playground to collect at 3.25pm. • Please avoid congregating at the school gate especially with dogs. • DROP OFF ZONE SHOULD BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE – DROP OFF AND POP OFF PLEASE. |
| <p>IN SCHOOL</p> | <p>NO CHANGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class groupings will be maintained throughout the school day – ie children from different classes will not mix. This includes in the playground where classes have designated zones changed daily. • All school staff will continue to wear a mask when moving around the school and if within 1m proximity to children in the class. • Staff will continue to maintain 2m distancing whenever possible but a 1m distance rule as a minimum where it cannot be avoided • Parents are not permitted into the school building unless by prior appointment to support learning eg IEP meetings. Parent Council Meetings will revert to virtual meetings for the time being. • Cleaning regimes will be maintained with touch point cleaning throughout the day and regular hand washing and sanitising on entering and leaving classes. • Sensible ventilation systems will be maintained with opportunities at break times to open windows wide to refresh the air in the classrooms. • Our school jumper should be worn as a minimum school uniform, but pupils are encouraged to wear several layers that can be removed or added throughout the day with a waterproof jacket an essential item. Please note jeans are not a comfortable option for school – warm joggers or leggings are more comfortable and quicker to dry. |
| <p>SCHOOL LUNCHES</p> | <p>Free school lunches are now available to all pupils in P1-P5. For the first week back, a sandwich option is available, and from week beginning 17th January a hot meal option can also be chosen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meals need to be pre-ordered and menus and order form will be sent home on a weekly basis. • Meals will revert to being eaten in class to avoid classes mixing in the dining room. • P6&P7 pupils are required to bring a packed lunch and families entitled to free school meals will continue to receive a BACS payment. |
| <p>STAFF TESTING</p> | <p>All school staff will continue to test twice weekly as a minimum with many testing daily as a precaution.</p> |
| <p>CONTINGENCY PLANS</p> | <p>In the event of teachers having to self isolate we will do everything we can to cover internally to keep classes open. Please be aware that classes may need to revert to remote learning if this is not possible.</p> |

Thank you for your continued support through these challenging times.
Liz Laird - Headteacher