

# Our Lady's Catholic College

Learn, live, love together in a caring Catholic community



4<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear parents and carers

I hope you were able to enjoy the Christmas season with your family and friends and that you were able to stay Covid free. We are delighted to have the pupils back in school today and to hear about their holidays. We firmly believe that although Covid cases are high it is much better for pupils to be in school with their friends and teachers. This is best for their education and their mental health.

As you will be aware, the government has sent out more guidance about restrictions in school. Whilst the new variant appears to be less of a health threat, the impact of staff having to self-isolate for up to ten days could be a problem and mean that we would have to shut various year groups for several days. To prevent that from happening it is very important that we follow the guidance, which will be reviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

## Testing

On site testing is happening this week and we have already found some positive cases. We would ask that you continue to test twice a week at home. Lateral flow test kits are given out free from school, we distributed these to all pupils on the last day of term. Please call into reception if you require any more.

If your child develops symptoms, they should go for a PCR test and remain at home until the result comes back. If the result is positive, they must self-isolate for up to 10 days. If you have a negative LFD test on day 6 and 7 you can then come out of isolation.

If PCR is negative, they can come back to school.

If a family member has tested positive for Covid there is no requirement for your child to stay at home. They should carry out an LFD test for seven days and come to school if the result is negative.

## Remote Learning for pupils who have tested positive for Covid

We are expecting higher number of cases in the coming weeks. All pupils self-isolating will have work set by their teacher and it will be found on Teams. Your child will need to know their email log in and password.

Our website has lots of videos and information to help you access and use Teams effectively. I have included the link below. Obviously on days pupils are unwell they would not need to complete the work.

<https://www.olcc.lancs.sch.uk/page/?title=TEAMS+%2D+how+to+use+teams+%2D+Video+guides+and+booklet&pid=134>



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## Masks

The guidance is now as follows:

*From January 4th, we also recommend that in those schools where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn in classrooms. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. This will also be a temporary measure. Pupils in these schools must also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and should wear it on dedicated transport to and from school. We would not ordinarily expect teachers to wear a face covering in the classroom if they are at the front of the class, to support education delivery, although settings should be sensitive to the needs of individual teachers.*

The guidance on who is exempt from wearing a mask has now changed and does not include being asthmatic. Please check against the guidance below and if you feel your child is exempt email their PSO explaining why. We understand that wearing masks is not comfortable but there is evidence that it reduces transmission in school so we want to encourage as many pupils as possible to wear them. We do understand that some parents are opposed to their child wearing a mask and we will not force pupils to do so.

*In relation to education settings, this includes (but is not limited to):*

- *people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability*
- *people for whom putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress*
- *people speaking to or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate*
- *to avoid the risk of harm or injury to yourself or others*
- *you are also permitted to remove a face covering in order to take medication.*

## School Visits

We are restricting the number of visitors to school to just essential ones. This means that you will not be given access to school without an appointment. I do not want to inconvenience anyone so please only come to school if you have an appointment. I will update you with further information as it emerges.

There is no doubt that 2022 will continue to have its challenges. However, we know we managed the last lockdown and learning very well as pupils and parents told us so. Therefore, we are confident we will cope with whatever is ahead. I am also confident that there will be many joys to share too with our pupils and families. I wish you all a happy and healthy 2022.

Yours sincerely

Helen Seddon

Headteacher

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