



# Birdsedge First School

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Head Teacher: Mrs Donna Waddington

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022

Dear Families

I hope this letter finds you well and having enjoyed a lovely Christmas break. Sending you all my best wishes for the new year ahead.

Apologies for emailing on Sunday but this morning we received some updated **guidance** from the Department for Education and I wanted to update you on this as soon as possible. The new guidance is to ensure that schools can remain open and that pupils can continue to receive face-to-face education in light of the rapid spread of the new variant.

### **Testing of pupils after the holiday:**

The testing of pupils on school sites remains for pupils from school Year 7 upwards, therefore there are no changes to this provision at Birdsedge or expectation that young children should be tested in this way. School will continue to provide access to regular LFT testing for all staff. We will also support any families with access to testing should you be concerned or need any help. Please do not hesitate to speak to me should this ever occur.

### **Face coverings:**

The guidance we have received today recommends that pupils, again from Year 7 upwards, once again wear a face covering in classrooms as well as in communal areas. As before, we will not be expecting or insisting on young children in our school wearing facemasks but will be asking that staff and visitors wear a face mask whenever they are inside our school building to help keep everyone in school as safe and healthy as possible.

### **Self isolation for individuals who test positive:**

The 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive test result for COVID-19 has now been reduced to 7. Individuals may now take lateral flow 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. If both these test results are negative, and your child does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return school from day 8.

### **Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19:**

Pupils who are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend school, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

With the absence of testing for young children, we do ask that together we remain vigilant and sensible – something you were all so brilliant at last term. We will contact families for any children displaying symptoms that we may be concerned about and likewise, ask you to keep us informed for any concerns you have too should this arise. Our ultimate aim though will always be for everyone to be safe whilst still ensuring access to education for all children. We will continue to have good hygiene routines in school, use



our air monitors in classrooms to ensure school is safely ventilated and avoid large gatherings of children during the school day to keep risk of transmission lower in school.

### **Remote Teaching and Learning:**

Pupils who are required to self-isolate after a positive test and who remain well or after they are recovered, will need a device to access work through our see-saw platform. We will also aim to provide daily access to live lessons for children during this time. This may be with the class or one to one with a member of staff depending which is most appropriate for the age and need of the child isolating. A personalised information booklet with log ins and instructions for accessing both see-saw and live lessons will be sent home with pupils individually by the end of next week. If pupils do not have a device or the necessary equipment, we will endeavour to deliver this to your home as soon as possible when and if it is needed.

### **...and finally...**

Whilst following all the government guidelines to ensure the safety of all adults and children we will do everything we can to ensure your child feels welcome and safe as they return to school. I know that being back in a familiar routine with a calm and positive ethos is what will help our return to school be enjoyable for children, just as it should be. We will be kick starting this with our 'Sparkle and Shine' day on **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January** where children are invited to come to school dressed in whatever makes them feel their best self. The day will all be about establishing routines, settling back into school life and helping children feel positive about the year ahead.



I thank you once again for your continued support to me, to my staff team and to our children.

I look forward to welcoming your child back to school and starting another year in a place I love so much.

With Kindest Regards and Warmest Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D Waddington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Mrs D Waddington