



Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Families,

## **Re: School Attendance and COVID-19**

I'm aware that in the past few weeks and months you have received an abundance of information from school about a whole host of different issues but, now all learners are back and school is in full flow, I wanted to take the opportunity to write to all families to explain and/or clarify some of the guidelines and expectations in relation to COVID-19.

### **What are the symptoms of coronavirus?**

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough
- High temperature (37.8° or above)
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell

You do not have to have all three symptoms in order to have COVID-19, you could have one, two or all.

### **Coronavirus or another illness?**

We appreciate it is extremely hard to make a judgement about whether or not symptoms are those of coronavirus or another illness, especially as we approach the cold and flu season. We would advise all families to err on the side of caution at all times. School can't make the decision for families, unfortunately, and it is at the family's discretion to decide whether it is suspected coronavirus or otherwise.

### **What to do if my child or a household member has symptoms of coronavirus?**

If your child or a member of your household have any of the above symptoms **do not send your child to school.**

The **person with symptoms** must **self-isolate** for 10 days or until 48 hours after symptoms have ended (whichever is later). Your **household** must also **self-isolate** for 14 days. Your isolation can end if and when you get a confirmed negative test result for symptomatic household members.

**Notify school** that your child or a household member has symptoms. You should inform us who the symptomatic person is, when they started having symptoms, if you have booked a test and if so when the test is. School has a confidential central database of (unconfirmed and confirmed) coronavirus cases. School may contact you to obtain further information from you, for example, the outcome of your test, etc.

It is vitally important that you **book a test** online (click [here](#)) or by calling 119.

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**Why is it so difficult to get a test?**

We're aware that a lot of our families who have suspected coronavirus are really struggling to get tests. This appears to be a national issue at the moment. Available slots at walk-in and drive-in testing sites are released throughout the day so our best advice is to just keep on trying!

If you have exhausted all other options, we do have a small number of home testing kits in school which we can issue to symptomatic learners. Please contact me at school if you require one.

**What if my child is unwell during the school day?**

We would encourage all families not to send their child into school if they are unwell. In the event your child becomes unwell during the school day, they will be assessed by a first aider. A first aider will take their temperature and discuss, with them, any other symptoms they may have. The first aider will contact families to advise them of the outcome of the assessment and it will, in most circumstances, be at the family's discretion as to whether or not the child should be sent home.

**Will work be provided for my child if they are required to self-isolate?**

Yes, absolutely! School will provide work to any learner who is required to self-isolate.

**Will my child's attendance record be impacted because they are required to self-isolate?**

Absolutely not. Your child will be marked as having a 'coronavirus related absence' which is authorised and neither a present or absent mark (it doesn't count towards their attendance).

**What should I do if my child has been in contact with someone with coronavirus symptoms outside of school who isn't in their household?**

We are being asked a lot about this issue at the moment. Families should be following the government's guidance on coronavirus within the community, e.g. Rule of Six, etc. If your child has been in contact with someone with coronavirus symptoms (a friend, family member, etc.), who they do not live with, they do not need to self-isolate unless a Contact Track and Trace Officer has been in contact with you to advise you otherwise.

**My child is unwell but doesn't have symptoms of coronavirus – what should I do?**

Respond in the usual way! The only exception is sickness and diarrhea where we are advising families to keep the learner off school for 48 hours after the last instance of sickness and/or diarrhea.

Attached to this letter is a helpful guide for parents from Public Health (I'd recommend saving this somewhere safe for future reference).

On our website you will also find dedicated pages about coronavirus and the school's response.



# Longdendale

H I G H S C H O O L

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Michael Potter  
Education Welfare Manager

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