

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year. I hope you have all had a lovely Christmas and New Year and you have all remained well. We are looking forward to seeing you all this week and have lots of exciting plans for the Spring term ahead.

As you will be well aware we still have to manage the risks from Covid and particularly the Omicron variant which is prevalent. Please find attached a very important letter from Dr Colin Cox regarding the national and local measures that are in place and that we will be following. Fortunately, the impact of Covid has still been relatively low in Orton School and of course we want to keep it that way to minimise the risk of having to revert to remote learning. Therefore, as we have before, we will be taking a cautious approach to any potential symptoms and close contacts. If children have any potential symptoms of Covid (these can be quite wide ranging) please do not send them into school but isolate immediately and seek testing at the earliest opportunity. Included in Dr Colin Cox's letter there are different options for certain scenarios, however, as a school it would be our preference for children who are household contacts of a Covid case to take the isolation option rather than daily testing to prevent spread within school. Remote learning will be made available for children who are isolating and well.

I would recommend doing your best to ensure you have some LFD tests available at home for regular testing of the whole household and also as these could help you reduce isolation periods at day 7 should someone in your household contract Covid.

Please continue to work closely with us to keep everyone as safe as possible and work to get through this in 2022. We know some of the rules can be frustrating especially as they change frequently (we are often equally frustrated and are simply the messengers!) but they are there to make sure we can carry on as normally as possible whilst keeping as many people as safe as possible.

During the latter part of the Autumn Term and over the Christmas holidays we had a few cases of Chicken Pox especially in our younger children. Please keep your eye out for symptoms of Chicken Pox in your children. Cases of chickenpox are generally **infectious from 2 days before the rash appears to 5 days after the onset of rash**. The usual exclusion period from school is 5 days from onset of rash, however all lesions should be crusted over before children return to nursery or school. If you have any doubts, then please give us a call and we will do our very best to help you.

Finally for now, I have attached our latest After School Club brochure. This term we will be running two free clubs. Tuesday's will be Razzmatazz Theatre School for Classes 1& 2 (3.40-4.40pm) and Wednesday's (3.30 - 4.30pm) Sports Club for Classes 3 & 4. These will swap round after February half term. Places will be limited so please remember to book your children in by emailing afterschool@orton.cumbria.sch.uk.

Enjoy the last day of the holiday and we will see you tomorrow.

Take care

Emma