

St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland

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COVID UPDATE JANUARY 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to begin by wishing you all a Happy New Year. I hope that the Christmas holiday was enjoyable for you and all your family. However, we are very much aware that the new Omicron strain of Covid-19 has unfortunately impacted on quite a number within our school community both during the break and upon our return.

Tuesday's on-site Lateral Flow Testing went very well, and I must praise the boys and girls for the responsible and mature attitude they showed. Thanks also to the support staff who worked tremendously hard to facilitate the tests and helped the process run smoothly. Unfortunately, the tests did reveal a small number of positive cases and these pupils have been asked to isolate.

There have been some recent changes to testing and isolation, and I will highlight these for you below:

- Given that the new variant is so easily spread, it is important that pupils continue to test themselves twice weekly – Sunday and Wednesday are the 2 days recommended. Testing kits have been made available to all pupils
- You may well be aware that from Tuesday 11 January, a positive LFT result will be enough evidence for anybody to begin isolation. The need for a confirmatory PCR test has been suspended. If your child's LFT result comes back as positive, please contact school through reception or via the c19@ismchs.com email
- Isolation now lasts 7 days as long as a negative LFT is returned on the 6th and 7th day of isolation. If this is the case, then pupils can return to school on the 8th day. Isolation only lasts for 10 days if someone cannot perform a Lateral Flow Test
- Close contacts do not need to isolate if they are fully vaccinated or under the age of 18, but it is recommended that they test for 7 continuous days to ensure the virus has not spread
- Masks are to be worn (unless exempt) in classrooms as well as on the corridors
- First and second vaccinations for 12-15 year olds will once again be offered to pupils. When more information is released on this, I will write with further details

At the time of writing, the measures above will be in place until 26 January, although this is subject to government review. I'm sure we all hope that by following these points, we will be able to overcome this latest wave of Covid infections. Thank you for your continued support and understanding at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Mr P Thompson

Headteacher