Monday 3rd January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year to you all!

I hope you have had a good rest and spent well-deserved time with your family and friends.

I wanted to email in advance of the children's return on Wednesday to update you on the main changes which have occurred over the holiday period.

Firstly, if your children are currently isolating or if there are positive tests before the children return on **Wednesday 5th January**, please email the office admin@stmaryandstpauls.org.uk so that we can prepare ensure you have access to remote learning on Google classroom if the children are well enough to complete work.

As infection rates in the area are still very high, we will need to continue with all the additional measures regarding ventilation, hygiene, handwashing, twice weekly testing for staff etc. We also encourage parents to wear masks in crowded places such as at drop off and pick up times.

**There have been some changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19:**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD 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. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8.

Children under 5 are not being advised to take part in daily testing of close contacts. If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and should not start daily testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19, and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible.

Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

Further information is available in the stay at home: stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection.

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

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

**Thank You**

We really hope that the virus rates begin to fall and that we are able to keep all classes open and the children in school. Closing bubbles would be a last resort and we will continue to do all we can to avoid this.

I will, of course, keep you informed if the situation changes or any further guidance is issued.

Thank you, as always, for your continued co-operation and I hope that 2022 brings more positivity and hope..

Best wishes



Iain Parks
Headteacher