

REDFIELD EDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Head teacher Mrs L Robinson
Chair of Governors Mrs B Kucharski

Dear Parents/carers

I wanted to write to you all to officially welcome you back for the start of the new school year. I hope you and your family had a good summer break; managed to enjoy some of the sunshine and spend much needed family time together. As a staff, we are very excited to welcome everyone back to school and hope this year will be less eventful than last.

It has been fantastic to see the children return with such enthusiasm and eagerness to learn. They are full of stories about their summer holidays and questions about the year ahead. There truly is a buzz around the school; excitement for what is to come and some sense of 'normality' as many of the previous restrictions have lifted.

Over the summer, we reviewed our Covid-19 risk assessment, in light of new guidance from the Department for Education, which can be viewed at www.redfielddedgeprimary.co.uk

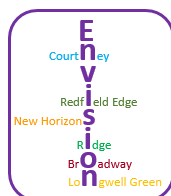
The risk assessment sets out how our school is operating safely on a day-to-day basis through cleaning regimes, hand and respiratory hygiene and keeping spaces and classrooms well ventilated. In addition we have published the processes for possible outbreak management.

It is understandable that you may have questions or concerns about how the risks of Covid-19 will be minimised in school and the measures we can all continue to take to help keep yourself, your child and everyone safer while Covid-19 continues to circulate. Below, I have summarised the national guidance on what has changed since July 2021 for your information and to hopefully ease any possible concerns.

What has changed since last term?

On 19 July, England moved to Step 4 of the government's roadmap out of the pandemic. Most remaining restrictions were lifted, such as social distancing and the legal requirement to wear face coverings. Schools therefore no longer have to organise children into pods during the school day, although this may be reinstated as a temporary measure if the local situation necessitates it.

From 16 August 2021, the government guidance states that anyone under the age of 18 and 6 months, or anyone who has had both doses of the vaccine, does not have to isolate if they are identified as a close contact of someone who tests positive for Covid-19.



What will happen if my child tests positive for Covid-19, develops symptoms or is unwell?

A child or adult of any age who has symptoms of Covid-19 or a positive rapid lateral flow test (LFD) will still have to isolate. If they haven't already, they will also need to take a PCR test to confirm they have Covid-19. The rules for positive cases have not changed and you will be asked to come and collect your child if they show signs of Covid-19 symptoms whilst in school and arrange a PCR test for them. If the test is positive, they will have to isolate for 10 days.

It is important to keep your child at home if they start to develop Covid-19 symptoms:

- a new, continuous cough,
- high temperature
- loss or change to sense of taste or smell.

It is important that you let us know if your child has Covid-19 symptoms and also tests positive for Covid-19. This is to enable us to track and report cases to the Local Authority and monitor our situation, looking for signs of a possible outbreak. You should contact us via telephone or enquiries@refieldedgeprimary.co.uk Please also send a copy of the positive PCR result notification to the school for our records.

As usual, as we enter the winter months, there will be other infectious diseases circulating. Even if your child has a negative Covid-19 test result, please ensure they are fever free for at least 24 hours and have recovered from acute symptoms before they return to school.

If you are concerned about other childhood illnesses, you may find this HANDi app useful: (<https://bnssgccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/campaigns/download-handi-app/>)

The HANDi app aims to provide advice and support to parents and carers when your child is unwell. It offers simple and straightforward advice for conditions in children and babies such as diarrhoea and vomiting, high temperature, 'chesty' symptoms, abdominal pain and common new-born problems.

The app takes you through a series of questions about the symptoms your child is experiencing and then advises on the best course of action, whether that's to treat at home (with a plan provided for each condition), to make a GP appointment, or to take them to A&E.

Download the HANDi App for Android phones at Google Play, and for iPhone or iPad using the app store or iTunes. Use the search term 'HANDi App'.

What will happen if there is a positive case of Covid-19 in my child's school?

Anyone who has symptoms will be asked to stay at home. If they also test positive for Covid-19 they will have to isolate for 10 days. This rule has not changed. Anyone who has Covid-19 symptoms will need to be collected from school and isolate until they have taken a PCR test and know the result.

Will my child be asked to isolate if they have been near a positive case?

No, but they will be encouraged to book a PCR test and they will not need to isolate while they wait for the result of this PCR test. This is the main change for schools and in most circumstances they no longer have to contact trace or ask close contacts to isolate when there is a positive case in their setting. This will mean fewer class and setting closures if there is a single positive case in the school which will help minimise disruption to face-to-face education.

Children under 4 years of age who are a contact will not be asked to take a PCR test unless the positive case is a member of their household.



What if there are several cases of Covid-19 at my child's school?

Each school will have an outbreak management plan for when cases rise in the school or in the local area. The plan is based on the latest government guidance. Each school will work with health protection and public health teams and use the plan to guide decisions or actions they need to take to reduce the spread.

If it is decided it is best to do so, certain measures may be reintroduced by local Directors of Public Health such as staggered start and end times of the school day, contact tracing, the wearing of face coverings and partial school closures where children will access their learning online.

Please be assured these measures will only be introduced if the risk to individuals' health outweighs the risk to disrupting our children and young people's education.

Who can have the Covid-19 vaccination?

Vaccination is now available to everyone over 16 and to those aged 12 to 15 who are clinically vulnerable or who live with someone who is immunosuppressed. As the vaccination programme progresses it is possible to be opened up to the wider 12 to 15-year-old age group. There is no plan currently to vaccinate children of primary age.

For the 2021 to 2022 flu season, the flu vaccination programme that already includes all children in primary school will be expanded to additional children in secondary school so that those in years 7 to 11 will now be offered the flu vaccination. This is part of the government's wider winter planning to reduce flu levels in the population, and therefore the potential impact on the NHS, when we are likely to see both flu and coronavirus (COVID-19) in circulation.

We are currently awaiting more information regarding Flu vaccinations in school. This year, parents will be contacted directly by the provider using an online system to give permission for their child. Please look out for more details to follow.

Finally, I, and the staff at Redfield Edge would like to say thank you for your continued support and all your efforts to keep your child and family, your child's school and your wider community safer.

How we can all continue to take precautions to keep ourselves and each other safe:

- Meet outdoors or in well ventilated areas
- Wear a face covering when you come into contact with people you don't normally meet in enclosed and crowded spaces
- Wash your hands regularly
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Stay at home if you feel unwell
- Have both doses of the vaccine if you can.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concern's or further questions.

Yours Sincerely

Lisa Robinson
Headteacher

