

Bulphan Church of England Academy
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1st November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back! We hope that you have all enjoyed a restful half term. This is always a busy term in school and we have no doubt that this half term will be no exception!

We have seen a rise in COVID 19 infections in primary schools recently so felt it important to reach out to you once again. Covid-19 is still very much a part of society and we must be vigilant to this. Whilst we want to return to normality as much as possible we still may have to make difficult decisions quickly to protect the safety of our own school community and I would ask you to work with us and support us in those decisions.

This half term we will be continually looking at national data and will make decisions that we feel are in the best interests of children, staff and parents. For example, we hope to have different performances for Christmas events however these may be for smaller audiences and if not safe to go ahead may have to be recorded, although we hope this will not be the case.

Our approach to COVID-19 is to maximise children's access to education. As you are aware, children are unlikely to become seriously ill with a COVID-19 infection, but they do need to self-isolate if they are infected. Whilst self-isolating, they miss out on the benefit of in-school education. It is therefore extremely important that we try to limit the spread of COVID-19 within our school setting to maximise school attendance at all times. Please as always remain vigilant to the symptoms of Covid-19 especially as we enter the winter period. If in any doubt about your child's health please seek a test and call us for advice.

We have seen COVID-19 infections in primary school-aged children in Essex increasing over the past few weeks. At this rate, we are being advised that it is possible that some primary schools could see significant numbers of pupils infected with COVID-19. Throughout the pandemic, regular household testing has been encouraged, but many schools across Essex are now strengthening that advice for primary age children.

From this half term, to help limit the spread of the infection within primary schools we are asking you to:

- Support your primary school child, if you are not already doing so, to undertake twice-weekly lateral flow device tests.
- Be alert to COVID-19 symptoms in your child (high temperature, new continuous cough, or loss of sense of smell or taste).
- Encourage good hand hygiene within your household as we continue to do in school.

'God's word is a lamp to guide our feet and a light for our path'
Inspired by Psalm 119:105

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Whilst we understand this is different guidance for some of you, we would encourage you to begin this practice as a family, where you feel it is appropriate. This will ensure that as much asymptomatic infection as possible is picked up and will help schools to continue to operate at full capacity and minimise the spread of infection through the school and wider community. Of course, there is no obligation to do this and you must do what you think is best for your family.

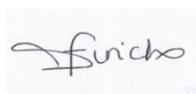
You can collect test kits from your nearest pharmacy using one of the new collect codes which can be downloaded from <https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits>. You can then hand this into your local pharmacy, who will provide you with test kits. You can also collect test kits from your local library or order them online via this link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>.

If a positive result is returned, your child/young person will need to seek a confirmatory PCR test and isolate for 10 days according to national guidance. If the PCR test is negative, your child can return to school if they are well enough to do so. More information about lateral flow testing can be found here: [Regular Rapid Lateral Flow Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Tests](#).

We appreciate that the changes in guidance can cause anxiety for some, but it is important that the education of our children and young people is prioritised this academic year. Our main priority is to allow a full education for all our children and in order to do this we need to work together.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,



Miss S Finch
Executive Headteacher

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