



Ebrington Primary & Nursery School

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Principal: Mr B F Guthrie, BA Hons ED PQH

4 January 2022

Dear Parent

Firstly, can I start by wishing a 'Happy New Year' to each member of our school community. It has been so good this morning to see so many of our pupils and staff back, engaged in learning.

I hope you were able to have a quality family break over the Christmas period, although having had contact from some families shortly after school closed, I am aware that a few were unfortunately impacted at some stage over the holiday period.

As has been well reported in the news, I do expect term two to have disruption in school due to Covid-19. This has been clear even on our first day back. Pupil and staff absence is inevitable, and is reflected throughout all schools in Northern Ireland, leaving a shortage of teachers and classroom assistants to keep the operation of classrooms safe.

With this in mind, there may be times during the course of the term when we have to move to remote/blended learning, for a short period of time. This will only happen when all other avenues have been exhausted-my priority is that pupils should remain in school.

As you know, each class has an online platform, either SeeSaw (Nursery-P4) or Google Classroom (P5-P7). These will be used in such cases. In the event of a closure at short notice, parents will be informed via text from our school system. Please ensure the school office have your most up-to-date phone number, if you have recently changed.

Please continue to follow our school guidance while on site. Do your best to ensure social distancing, do not congregate in large groups at drop off/ pick up time and wear a mask if visiting school.

We will be continuing with all our current school mitigations that were in place prior to the end of last term. This will mean we are still not in a position to offer Breakfast Club to parents, and will continue with the 2:00pm finish on a Friday for all pupils, to allow a thorough deep clean of the classrooms and building. Both these arrangements will be reviewed in the lead up to the half term break in February. Dinners and After Schools will continue as was.

If you feel your child is displaying any of the identified symptoms, I trust that you act as responsible parents and follow the appropriate course of action.

Please find some updated information from the PHA website on self-isolation guidance and close contacts following the information in the letter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support at this challenging time.

Yours sincerely

B Guthrie, Principal

Who should self-isolate and for how long

If you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), however mild, you should begin self-isolating and book a PCR test. These are available for free.

Coronavirus (COVID-19): testing

You should continue to isolate until the result of the test is available.

If the PCR result is positive you should isolate for 10 days from the date the PCR test was taken or the date symptoms started, whichever is sooner.

This means that if, for example, your symptoms started at any time on the 15th of the month (or if you did not have symptoms but your first positive COVID-19 test was taken on the 15th), your isolation period ends at 23:59hrs on the 25th of the month.

Ending isolation early

You may be able to end your self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days provided you have two negative lateral flow tests (LFT) taken 24 hours apart.

You can take the first LFT from day six of your isolation period. The second should be taken the following day at least 24 hours later.

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.

The earliest you can end isolation is on day seven (providing the LFTs on day six and seven are both negative).

Report your LFD test results ([external link opens in a new window / tab](#)) after taking each test

If either your day six or seven test are positive you can test again the following day. You should only end your self-isolation after you have had two consecutive negative LFD tests which should be taken at least 24 hours apart. You should stop testing after you have had two consecutive negative test results.

You can end self-isolation as long as you do not still have a high temperature. If you still have a high temperature, you need to continue to self-isolate until your temperature has returned to normal for 48 hours.

You do not need to continue self-isolating for more than seven days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell/ taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

This guidance also applies to children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting.

If you leave self-isolation on or after day seven following two negative lateral flow results, you are strongly advised to limit close contact with other people in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces and to minimise contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19.

Close contacts of COVID-19

If you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, self-isolation and testing requirements will depend on whether you're fully vaccinated, your age and where you work.

A close contact can be:

anyone who lives in the same household as someone with COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19

or

anyone who has had any of the following types of contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 with a PCR test:

face-to-face contact including being coughed on or having a face-to-face conversation within one metre

skin-to-skin physical contact for any length of time

been within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact

sexual contacts

been within two metres of someone for more than 15 minutes (either as a one-off contact, or added up together over one day)

travelled in the same vehicle

travelled in the same plane

Adults who are not fully vaccinated

If you are aged 18 and over and you are either unvaccinated, have had one dose only, or if it is less than 14 days since your second dose:

you should self-isolate immediately for 10 days following last contact with the positive person, you do not need to book a PCR test unless you develop symptoms.

If you are not able to be vaccinated for a clinical reason, you should follow the guidance above.

Fully vaccinated close contacts

If you are fully vaccinated (more than 14 days since you received the second dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine) or you have taken part in an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial, you do not need to take a PCR test.

You are advised to isolate and take a lateral flow device (LFD) test as soon as possible.

If this is negative you can stop isolating but should continue to take daily lateral flow tests until the tenth day after the last date of contact with the positive case.

The lateral flow should ideally be taken before you leave the house for the first time each day.

If any lateral flow test is positive you should isolate immediately and book a PCR test.

If at any time you develop symptoms, you should isolate immediately and book a PCR even if the lateral flow test is negative.

Even if you're fully vaccinated, if you have been identified as a close contact, you are advised not to visit hospitals or care homes for 10 days and to minimise contact with those known to be at higher risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19 for 10 days.

School aged children (including children of primary school age) and young people who are not fully vaccinated

You are advised to isolate and take a lateral flow device (LFD) test as soon as possible.

If this is negative you can stop isolating but should continue to take daily lateral flow tests until the tenth day after the last date of contact with the positive case.

The lateral flow should ideally be taken before you leave the house for the first time each day.

If any lateral flow test is positive you should isolate immediately and book a PCR test.

If at any time- you develop symptoms, you should isolate immediately and book a PCR even if the lateral flow test is negative.

Information on how close contacts are identified and managed in schools and other structured and supervised settings is available at:

Coronavirus (COVID-19): staying safe in schools, colleges and universities

Children under the age of five who are close contacts

It is no longer necessary for children under five years of age to take a PCR test – even if they have symptoms like a cough or temperature - unless advised to do so by their doctor.

If they develop symptoms and are identified as a close contact of a positive case, parents are encouraged to carry out a lateral flow test.

If this is positive they should then take a PCR test to confirm the positive result. Daily lateral flow tests are not required.

If a child has been identified as a close contact and has symptoms there is an increased risk that the child may have COVID-19.

If it is not possible to carry out any test because the child will not tolerate the swab, parents and carers should take a cautious approach and avoid contact with vulnerable and older adults.

They should also stay at home until they do not have a temperature and are well enough to return to school or childcare.