

28 February 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back! I hope you are all well and have had a wonderful half term break. As you will be aware the government has provided updated guidance on the way society and schools manage Covid-19. Whilst the vast majority of measures will be removed in the coming week, we still have a collective and personal responsibility to keep children, staff, you and the wider communities safe. Therefore, I wanted to update and reassure you on how Esteem schools will be responding to the latest Covid-19 challenges and how the updated guidance will be implemented in our schools.

### Symptoms and Isolation – Updated Guidance

Whilst the need to isolate will be removed, we ask that staff, children and families take sensible decisions around attending school where individuals have Covid or are unwell with Covid symptoms.

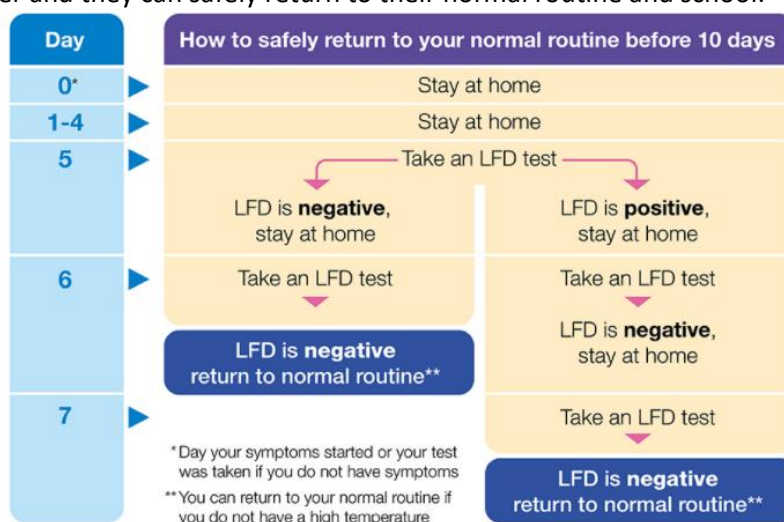
The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- **High temperature**
- **New, continuous cough**
- **Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**

Where your child has any of these symptoms you should order a PCR test and they should avoid contact with other people whilst awaiting a result. Please do not send your child to school until a negative test result has been confirmed and they are well enough to be in school.

### Confirmed Covid-19 Cases

Where your child has a confirmed case of Covid-19 we ask that you do not send your child into school for the advised 5-10 days whilst they are potentially still infectious. This enables children, staff and families to feel safe and keep children in school, where we all absolutely want them to be. Many people will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days. You may choose to perform an LFD test on your child from 5 days after their symptoms started (or the day the PCR was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another LFD test the next day. If both these test results are negative, and they do not have a high temperature, the risk that they are still infectious is much lower and they can safely return to their normal routine and school.



For some children we appreciate that LFD tests are unsuitable, and we would ask for parents to follow the standard 10-day isolation period in these circumstances. The risk that they are still infectious is much lower and they can safely return to their normal routine and school.

#### **Children who are close contacts of positive Covid cases**

Children who live with or have been a close contact of someone who has COVID-19, they should continue to attend the setting as normal unless they have symptoms or develop symptoms.

#### **Face Masks**

Whilst face masks are no longer advised for children or adults, we absolutely understand that some families, children, staff and educational visitors may wish to continue to wear masks, and this will be supported.

#### **Other ongoing recommendations**

We will of course maintain the ongoing recommendations regarding reducing the risks of transmission with these being:

- Ongoing focus on regular hand washing and good hand hygiene
- Maintaining a level of ventilation whilst balancing this with keeping our classrooms at a reasonable and comfortable temperature.
- Maintaining the cleaning of school on a daily basis.

#### **Wellbeing and practical support whilst staying at home**

The government have acknowledged that staying at home and avoiding contact with other people can be difficult, frustrating, and lonely for some people. Please remember to take care of your mind as well as your body and get support if you need it. [Every Mind Matters](#) provides simple tips and advice to take better care of your mental health.

The [NHS Volunteer Responders programme](#) is still available to help support those who need it. Volunteers can collect and deliver shopping, medication and other essential supplies and can also provide a regular friendly phone call. Call 0808 196 3646 between 8am and 8pm, 7 days a week to self-refer or visit NHS Volunteer Responders for further information.

If you are unable to get support and require it, please contact your school who will assist you as much as they can to put a care package in place.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,



Julian Scholefield  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Esteem Multi-Academy Trust**