



Tuesday 4 January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year! Welcome back to the start of a new year and to the Spring Term. We hope you have all had a wonderful Christmas and that you, your children and those close to you remain safe and well.

As you know, Michelle Farr has moved on to a new appointment in Bradford. We are very grateful for all she has achieved during her time at The Forest School and know she will be sorely missed by yourselves, your wonderful children and by staff here at school. We wish her every success in her new role and have asked that she remains a friend to Forest and visits us when she is able.

We want to reassure you that in our new roles as Interim Co-Headteachers, we are committed to ensuring your children are safe, happy and continue to make progress with their learning, social skills and independence. We will continue to ensure your children are provided with outstanding learning opportunities and experiences. Information regarding their progress, attainment and wellbeing will be communicated with you regularly. We will endeavour to maintain the excellent relationships established with you by Mrs Farr, ensuring dialogue is open, honest and based on mutual trust and respect. We will always place your child's best interests at the centre of everything we do. We know that you will support us both with this and we welcome your feedback, including any concerns you may have, to enable us to work together as effectively as possible.

We are looking forward with optimism to an exciting, vibrant and busy term in school. However, we must also be mindful that COVID-19 remains ever-present in our communities. Measures remain in place in school, as advised by the government, to keep us all safe and well, and to ensure schools stay open and face-to face learning can continue.

Before the Christmas holiday, we notified parents of the staggered start to the Spring Term, to enable lateral flow device (LFD) tests to be taken in school by our Secondary pupils on the first day of their return. A reminder that Primary and Key Stage 3 pupils will return on Wednesday 5 January, with Key Stage 4 and Bramble Class pupils returning on Thursday 6 January.

We are asking Secondary pupils (and all staff), in line with government guidance, to continue to take a lateral flow test twice weekly. Anyone who tests positive via a LFD test will need to take a PCR test and must not attend school whilst awaiting the results. If your child is displaying any symptoms of COVID-19 (a new or continuous cough, a loss or change to the



sense of taste or smell, or a high temperature), however mild, please do not send them into school. If a child develops any of these symptoms whilst in school, we will contact parents/carers to collect their child immediately, obtain a PCR test and self-isolate until a negative result is returned. We understand that some children find it difficult to tolerate a COVID test, so if that is the case we would ask that they remain at home for the full 10-day isolation period.

We ask for your continued support in complying with a request to collect your child, if we make it. We appreciate this can be inconvenient, but we must not lose sight of the need to work together to control the spread of coronavirus and keep everyone safe. We will also continue to contact parents if their child is known to be a close contact of someone who has received a positive test result. In this case, the guidance strongly advises that a daily LFD test is taken every day for 7 days, instead of self-isolation.

The self-isolation guidance for those who have tested positive for coronavirus has changed. It is now possible to end self-isolation after 7 days, following 2 negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart. The first LFD test should not be taken before the sixth day.

On 2 January 2022, the Government provided updated guidance for schools in relation to COVID-19. For now, we can operate in much the same way as we did before Christmas, with classes and students being able to mix (no need for “bubbles”), and activities such as assemblies can continue. We will also still be able to welcome parents and visitors into school, but would ask that a lateral flow test is taken beforehand and that a face covering is worn.

The main change to the guidance is that it is now recommended that pupils (from Year 7 upwards) and staff wear face coverings, not only in corridors and communal areas but in classrooms too, to protect against the spread of infection. This is a temporary measure that will be reviewed by the government on 26 January. In accordance with this new guidance, we will encourage our Secondary children to follow this guidance, where they are able to do so safely and sensibly. We would ask you to prepare your child for this and help them to understand how to safely wear and remove their face covering.

We understand that for many pupils, the wearing of facemasks is not possible, so clearly they will be exempt. Adults will continue to wear face coverings in communal areas and in classrooms where the wearing of them does not impact the pupils' access to education or support, or indeed the ability to communicate effectively. For example, the guidance states that a teacher does not need to wear a face covering whilst leading learning at the front of the classroom. We will of course continue with our existing measures to mitigate risk, as outlined in our COVID-19 risk assessment, for example regular handwashing; regular cleaning of surfaces and resources; keeping occupied spaces well-ventilated and twice weekly lateral flow testing.



Here are the links to some of the government's updated guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/step-4-update-what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges#helping-make-nurseries-childminders-schools-and-colleges-as-safe-as-possible>

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/testing-measures-to-ensure-young-people-return-to-classrooms?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=9c3c2ad5-f803-4028-88aa-11dad5e0df16&utm_content=daily

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best wishes,

Lisa Frankland
Interim Co-Headteachers

Paul James