



Westfield School

Headteacher: Ms Nicki Gilbert
Chair of Governors: Ms Ceri Hibbert

26 January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

IMPORTANT COVID UPDATE: Please read carefully

I was hoping not to have to send a letter like this again, but remain hopeful this may be the last one.

Despite what is being reported by the national news, Covid cases in Herefordshire have never been higher, and school is now becoming very close to having to implement a partial, or even total closure. Lateral flow testing contributes to a safer school environment, and vaccine increase the resistance to a person developing symptoms if they come into contact with the virus, but does not prevent the presence of the virus in that person.

The current situation is that all adults are testing daily. Most recently, even having returned a negative lateral flow test in the morning, what starts as a 'sniffle' and generic cold symptoms seems to be a very clear indicator that a positive test will be returned within the next 48-72 hours. There have been four occasions of this within the past few days, so I am basing this on clear evidence. I am therefore asking you **not** to send your child in, if they are displaying **ANY** symptom that may previously have been associated with a seasonal cold or flu virus, even if they have returned a negative result. Lateral flow tests are for daily use if people have **no symptoms**. **ANY** symptoms should either lead to you going for a PCR, or keeping your child at home for at least 48 hours, following which we would want a further Lateral flow test with a negative result and no symptoms being displayed.

As adults in school have been fully vaccinated, a child may pass on the virus which would lead to no symptoms, but a positive lateral flow test, meaning the adult is required to self-isolate for a minimum of five days; this is leading to extreme shortage within our teams. We are very close to having to implement partial or even full closure of school if we have insufficient staff to safely care for and educate our pupils.

We understand that any short-notice alteration can be very difficult, which is why we are contacting you in advance of any necessary implementation. Neither of these scenarios will come with forewarning, and I assure you, will be mitigated as much as practicable.

Whilst there is no action required as a result of this letter, I just want to ensure you are fully informed of the ongoing fragility of arrangements.

It goes without saying, I have crossed every finger and toe to hope the above circumstances do not arise, and wish you and your family ongoing good health. 😊

Your sincerely,

Nicki Gilbert
Head Teacher