



Edmonton County School

Educating our Community for Success

18 April 2022

Updates on the new COVID-19 guidance – ‘Living with COVID-19’

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you and your families are safe and well, and that you have been able to enjoy the Easter break. I am writing to you with the latest Government updates regarding Covid-19 and how these affect schools.

The risk of serious illness from COVID-19 is much lower than earlier in the pandemic due to a combination of the milder Omicron variant being dominant and high levels of immunity in the population. However, in order to continue to minimise risk to children, families and staff, schools will still have measures in place to minimise spread of COVID-19 and other infectious disease. This includes a continued focus on good ventilation, regular cleaning, and good hand hygiene. Please remind your child/ren to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue or their sleeve (not hands) when they cough or sneeze, and to put used tissues in the bin immediately. Ask them to wash their hands with soap and water often, especially before eating, and to use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.

Lateral flow tests: From the beginning of April the Government has stopped providing free COVID-19 testing for the general public in England - this includes access to tests for schools. This means that we will no longer be providing free packs of lateral flow test kits to our children and families. However, lateral flow tests are available to buy at chemists and from online providers.

What do I do if my child has a positive COVID-19 test result?

Although free testing is no longer available, some families may choose to continue to regularly test their children for Covid-19. From 1 April, children and young people aged 18 and under with a positive COVID-19 test result will be advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for *three* days, which is when they are most infectious. (The advice for *adults* is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for *five* days).

What do I do if my child has possible COVID-19 symptoms?

Children and young people who are *unwell and have a high temperature* should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can return to school when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend. Anyone with *mild* symptoms such as a runny nose or a mild cough may attend, as long as they are well enough to do so.

Face masks: ECS students are not required to bring a mask to school, and are no longer required to wear a mask anywhere in school. We do understand that some parents and students may be anxious about this, and so students may continue to wear masks in school if they wish to. Please note that if students opt to continue wearing masks, we will continue to expect these to be worn appropriately. This approach will be kept under constant review.

Vaccinations: The national vaccination programme is opening up to healthy 5–11-year-olds from April, and I would encourage you to take up this offer. 12 to 15 year-olds will still be able to access the vaccines outside of schools at a vaccination centre. Please note that all vaccinations will take place *outside* of schools in vaccination centres, pharmacies, GPs and walk-in centres. Parents can book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment online or by speaking to their GP or calling 119. You can read more about the vaccine and book an appointment here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/>

Thank you for your continued support. I am hopeful that by working together we can continue to ensure our school community is as safe as possible. If you have any questions or concerns about the content of this letter, please contact info@edact.org.uk with any enquiries.

Yours faithfully,
Mr Paul Miller, Head of School

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