



Dashwood Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy

Growing together; succeeding together

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly I would like to update you on my situation. Whilst I am still off work, I am improving and am starting to do a bit of work from home. I hope to be back at some point this term.

I am writing this letter to you as an update to the current Covid pandemic. We have had a number of cases within the school community but most of these are linked to one year group in particular who have been notified. As per the advice from Public Health England and the local health protection team, that year group are back to being in a bubble and this is working well to contain the situation. We are very aware however, that the cases are increasing across the local area as well as across the country. With all this in mind, I thought it best to remind you of what we are doing to help stop the spread and what you can do to support your family and us at school.

- **Hand washing** – we continue to ensure all pupils wash their hands/sanitise on a regular basis and this is something they should continue to do at home.
- **Good personal hygiene** – using tissues if coughing or sneezing, binning the tissues and then washing hands: catch it, bin it, kill it.
- **Ventilation** – all our windows are open to ensure good ventilation. This is something you can do at home too if you have visitors etc. Please remember that pupils may need to come to school wearing more layers to help them keep warm. They are able to wear their coats in class if they are particularly cold however we do have the heating on (not great for the environment but best practise whilst the pandemic is still here).
- **Cleaning** – we continue to have a rigorous additional cleaning system for the classrooms and resources.
- **Following isolation guidance and testing** – this remains the same as it has done all year. Anyone with symptoms of Covid must stay at home and have a PCR test. Staff are strongly encouraged to take twice weekly lateral flow tests and we recommend that you as adults do so too (you can pick them up free <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>). We have been informed that should someone in the school have the omicron variant, we should be contacted to be able to support track and trace. Currently, we do not complete any track and trace for cases as per the guidelines.

What are we doing differently based on the new guidance which came out yesterday:

- All adults in the school building are required to **wear face coverings** in communal areas
- We are asking parents/carers to **consider wearing a mask when you drop off/collect** as the areas around the classrooms do get very busy. If you are **talking to a member of staff at a classroom door, we ask that you do wear a mask please** to help protect the staff. We also kindly ask that if you **attend the PTFA events** after school, you **wear a mask** too as you will be in close contact with others despite it being outside.
- We are considering doing more of our **assemblies** virtually for this term to reduce the number of children together in one area.



'To be able to dream about the future, while being inspired in the present to reach those dreams' Dr Russell J Quaglia



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- **Plays** that were scheduled to go ahead are currently doing so as we previously planned – social distanced seats, one class at a time, no more than 2 adults per child. The changes we have made to this are: **all adults must wear masks** when attending as per the new guidelines. If you can **attend on your own**, that would be amazing to reduce numbers further. **Adults** are being asked to **take a lateral flow test** the morning of the play and only attend if your test is negative (a positive test means you need to isolate and get a PCR done). Please do not bring your tests to show us, this is a goodwill action which will help to keep us all safe. If there are any changes to guidelines or we have an outbreak of cases in these year groups, we may have to resort to filming the plays and not accepting audiences. This is something we will of course inform you of if required.

What can I do to protect my family outside of school?

- Ensure you follow all guidance like wearing face coverings when visiting shops etc.
- Consider visiting places at quieter times.
- Consider taking lateral flow tests before you attend any events and asking anyone who is visiting your house to take one before they arrive.
- Continue to get a PCR test if you have been in contact with a positive case or you have symptoms and isolating if you have symptoms and/or a positive PCR result.
- As adults, taking lateral flow tests yourself twice a week.
- Following the same main guidelines we do at school – additional cleaning, good hygiene and hand washing, having good ventilation when indoors or choosing to meet outdoors.

I realise that this feels a little like history repeating itself however, we are still able to ensure that school life is very exciting and we are not changing anything which would prevent the pupils from having the best possible education. As always, we will follow guidelines and keep you updated but I wanted to thank you in advance for your support in helping us get through this term especially so we can all enjoy the Christmas break safely.

Kind regards



Mrs Amy Rogers
Principal