

Head Teacher
Letter sent via email

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Dear Parent/Carer,

Enhanced Support Package

Yesterday the Government announced that Cheshire West and Chester will become part of an Enhanced Support Package due to the increasing spread of the Delta variant across all areas of the borough. In response to this situation we are introducing a range of additional measures to help reduce the spread of the virus.

Face coverings

On the 8th June 2021, I reintroduced the requirement for staff and pupils in Year 7 and above to wear face coverings indoors while in school, including in classrooms where social distancing cannot be maintained, with the exception of certain lessons such as PE. This requirement is an additional measure to support schools to manage the increased risk of school-based transmission due to increasing cases and is fully supported by central government.

The purpose of wearing a face covering is to minimise the risk of transmitting the virus to other people if you are infectious but don't have symptoms. We know that up to 30% of people with COVID-19 don't experience symptoms, and everyone who has the virus will be infectious in the two days before their symptoms start, so wearing face coverings is one of a range of infection prevention and control measures that have been introduced in schools to protect pupils and staff.

Exemptions for wearing face coverings are still in place and further information about exemptions can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own>.

Any pupil who has one of the conditions on the exemption list will not be expected to wear a face covering while in school. Anyone communicating to someone who relies on lip reading will also be exempt from wearing a face covering.



No-one will be excluded from education on the grounds that they are not wearing a face covering. For any pupils that do forget their face covering or their face covering becomes damp or damaged and they do not have a spare, schools will have a small emergency supply of single use masks.

Asymptomatic (no symptom) testing

Additional PCR testing for those without symptoms is being rolled out across specific geographical areas and settings identified as having cases of the Delta variant, to enable us to identify people who do not have symptoms but are infectious. This includes asking households to book an appointment for a PCR test at testing centres, as well as distributing PCR home testing kits to pupils in schools to complete at home and return to school. We would encourage everyone who is asked to take a PCR test to please do so.

Alongside asymptomatic PCR testing we would like to remind everyone to continue to participate in twice weekly asymptomatic LFD home testing. These tests should only be used if you feel well and should not be used instead of a PCR test if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or have been advised to take a PCR test. Pupils in Year 7 and above can access LFD home testing kits via their school and the remainder of the household can access LFD home test kits from a range of locations found in the links below:

- Collect home testing kits from a **local community collect site**, locations can be found in this link: <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>
- Collect home testing kits from a **testing site**, locations can be found in this link: <https://find-covid-19-rapid-test-sites.maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>
- Ordering home testing kits to be delivered to your home using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Vaccinations

You will be aware that despite the increasing numbers, hospitalisations and deaths have not increased, to ensure this continues we would like to encourage everyone who is eligible and has not had their first vaccination to please book an appointment using the national booking portal <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>. Anyone who has had their first dose of the vaccination is reminded to have their second dose to ensure they are fully protected.

Playing your part will ensure that we can continue to provide face-to-face teaching and avoid the need to return to online teaching. It will also ensure that we reduce the risk of outbreaks in local businesses who are crucial to providing jobs for the local community.

For the most up-to-date information about COVID-19 please visit <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/>

Yours sincerely



Ian Ashworth
Director of Public Health