



NEWSLETTER – 7TH JANUARY 2022

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

Welcome back and a Happy New Year to you all!

As you will know, the Omicron variant continues to present challenges both in school and outside of school in our community. We would like to highlight some areas which may be affected in the coming weeks and what we will do to mitigate these. We won't know the impact of Omicron until the children have been back to school for a while and anticipate the situation will continue to change as it has done throughout the pandemic. We will keep you updated. We are being asked to prepare for staff absences of up to 25%.

Our mitigations against this will include: flexible use of all the staff in school – your child might not always have their own class teacher and the class may be covered by other suitably trained support staff; classes may be combined if teaching staff absences mean that classes would otherwise close.

If staff absences exceed safe limits, the schools may have to close classes and provide remote learning. This would be a time-limited absolute last resort and would only happen after consultation with the local authority.

School attendance is statutory for all pupils unless; they receive a positive result; they have Covid symptoms; they are otherwise unwell. If your child has a new persistent cough or high temperature or change of taste or smell, they must not attend school and you should book them a PCR test as soon as possible; drive-through or walk-in tests seem to be returned quicker than home tests. If your child does not have Covid or symptoms (isolating - awaiting a test), they should be in school. If they do not attend school because someone they live with has Covid, this will be treated as an **unauthorised absence**.

We are aware that there are many other reported symptoms but officially, these are the key indicators of Covid. If in doubt about whether your child should attend, please contact us. We have sent a flowchart with this letter which may prove useful. Please note that the current updated guidance states that a positive lateral flow test does **not** require a follow up PCR as advised on the flowchart. However, this continues to be subject to change – please keep an eye on updated guidance from us.

If your child receives a positive lateral flow test result, they should follow government guidance regarding isolation <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-selfisolate-and-what-to-do/>

If your child is entitled to a benefits related free school meal and has to self-isolate or if their class is closed, we will contact you to make arrangements to ensure that this entitlement is made available.

Having access to fresh air is a key tool in our attempts to limit the spread of Covid and so we will continue to have windows and doors open as much as possible. You may want to consider dressing your child in additional layers to help to keep them warm in the cold weather. We will continue to use CO2 monitors to ensure that classes are as well ventilated as possible. Full information can be found here about Covid in schools and Early Years providers:

<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>

You can also keep up to date with the number of live cases in our community here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51768274>

Victoria McConnell

DIARY DATES

Parent Teacher meetings:

Nelson – w/b 31.1.22 and 7.2.22

Wensum – w/b 7.2.22

Half term – w/b 14.2.22

World book day – 3.3.22

Nelson showcase – 25.3.22

Wensum showcase – 29.3.22 and 30.3.22

Victoria McConnell

Headteacher

Wensum Junior and Nelson
Infant Schools