



2 January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year from the whole BGLC team and I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with your families and friends. We all hope 2022 sees less disruption than last year but it is clear that COVID-19 is sadly still very much with us, as a school we will continue to play our part in ensuring the safety of the wider community.

Today we have received updated guidance to mitigate the transmission of the Omicron variant and what actions will need to be taken when we return in the coming days, these are highlighted below.

JANUARY RETURN

In order to facilitate the mass testing required of schools in the New Year we will be adopting a staggered start to term and the details on how this will be approached are outlined below. Buses will operate as normal. Students will be called out of their lessons through the mornings of Wednesday 5th & Thursday 6th to be tested.

- Students in **Post 16, Year 11 and Year 9** will return to school, for the spring term, on **Wednesday 5 January 2022**
- Students in **Years 7, 8 and 10** will return to school, for the spring term, on **Thursday 6 January 2022**

Face Coverings:

From today, Sunday 2 January, it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice is short term only, to support pupils and teachers as they return to school this term and builds on the existing proportionate guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings. We are updating our guidance to reflect this. The advice on face coverings in classrooms will be in place until Wednesday 26 January, when Plan B regulations are currently scheduled to expire, at which point it will be reviewed.

Close Contacts:

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Self Isolation:

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test

must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 8.

Once notified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact, all eligible staff, pupils and students should:

- Take an LFD each day for 7 days and report the results through the National Online Reporting System <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>
- If they **test negative**, they can continue to attend school.
- If they **test positive**, they should
 - also report this to school via Weduc or by email to reception@brookvalegroby.com
 - self-isolate and
 - arrange a PCR test <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> to confirm the result. If the PCR is positive, they must self-isolate for 10 days.

If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if a further LFD is positive.

- Outside of school, they should continue to follow the advice set out in the Sunday 12 December press release.
- Anyone over the age of 18 years and 6 months who is not vaccinated, must isolate in line with government guidelines if they are a close contact of a positive case.

Vaccinations:

On Wednesday 22 December, the government accepted advice from the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) that a primary course of vaccination should be offered to children aged 5 to 11 years old who are in a clinical risk group, or who are a household contact of someone (of any age) who is immunosuppressed. The NHS is working through updated guidance and will set out how this is going to be operationalised shortly.

In response to the threat from the Omicron variant, the JCVI advised that a Pfizer booster vaccine should be offered to:

- children aged 12 to 15 years old who are in a clinical risk group or who are a household contact of immunosuppressed individuals, and those who are severely immunosuppressed and have had a third primary dose
- all young people aged 16 to 17 years old

The NHS will communicate how eligible children and young people can get their boosters shortly.

Exams and assessments in January

Examinations and assessments in January should go ahead as originally planned. Settings should liaise with their awarding organisation to make sure they have the latest information on adaptations to the delivery of the exams and assessments, and procedures for special considerations.

Next Steps

As we continue to learn more about the impacts of the Omicron variant. To prepare for any possible changes in public health advice, the DfE is asking all schools and trusts to revisit their existing outbreak plans to ensure they are well prepared for any future changes and ensure they are familiar with the [Contingency Framework Guidance](#).

Measures for future changes are:

- Increased use of LFD testing, potentially including more on-site testing
- The reintroduction of face coverings in classrooms
- Limiting residential educational visits, open days, transition or taster days, parental attendance in settings and live performances in settings
- Restricting attendance as a last resort (we know that this is already happening on the basis of Public Health advice in some areas of the country)

We are really looking forward to welcoming students back in the coming days and whilst there is a lot of information above; much is what we have already experienced and become accustomed to. We will be reviewing our daily operational routines as part of our ongoing risk assessment process and will make any necessary changes to ensure the safety of our community in the coming months.

Yours sincerely



W Teece
Headteacher