

Tuesday 25th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been an interesting start of the week and I felt that it would be good to give you a little update.

First of all, thank you to all for only using the provision onsite when you cannot work from home, as this has really helped to reduce the risk onsite for your children and staff and allowed staff to focus more on children working from home too. In addition, a huge thank you for your support yesterday. We had a number of staff who were not able to drive in to work yesterday, with the snow and ice making conditions dangerous for them. In addition, we do not currently have a site manager and it would have been impossible to get paths cleared in time to facilitate pupils and parents on site safely. Whilst we contemplated closing the school completely, it is vital that we do all that we can to support urgent care providers and therefore kept some staff on site to care for the few children who have parents urgently needed in the NHS at work. In most cases, the support and understanding was phenomenal, and I truly thank you for working with us as we weave our way through this pandemic.

Safety is paramount and you may have heard in the news of the lateral flow tests being offered to teaching staff. This Government programme begins this week and is a good initiative to help stop the spread of COVID amongst a school community. Negative test results will lead to a safer school. However, should tests come back as positive, we would need to look into staffing numbers to keep Bubbles open. Primary staff testing will take place twice weekly and is being rolled out in all primary schools across the country. We will continue to work tirelessly to keep Woolenwick Juniors open for those allowed to attend, but of course the safety of everyone is paramount.

- Our first testing evening will be Wednesday 27th January.
- If staff have a negative test they will come into work as normal.
- If a staff member takes two tests (one after the other) and gets 'void' results they will go and get a PCR (test at a centre) and they will have to self-isolate alongside their household until the result is known. We will then risk assess bubbles that may be affected and communicate any instructions.
- If a staff member gets a positive result, they will need to get a PCR (test at a centre) and they will have to self-isolate alongside their household. We will then risk assess bubbles that may be affected and communicate any instructions.

We have thought carefully about when we choose to do the tests for our staff and have chosen the option that we hope will keep bubbles open, will inform Critical Workers ASAP of any bubble changes and also help to manage the additional workload that is now being placed on staff to manage this. This timetable will be trialled for two weeks initially.

Therefore, from this week:

We will test on a Wednesday evening and a Sunday, early evening. It is really important that adults check their SchoolGateway emails/messages on a Sunday evening and on a Wednesday. It would also be helpful if you could check in with other Critical Worker parents to make sure they know about the changes. We will not have time to phone every parent individually. We will only communicate with you if your bubble is affected. Emails should not be received past 8.00pm (no news is good news).

If your child or anyone in your household has symptoms, please continue to act on the side of caution and get them tested and don't come in to school. You will find instructions of what to do if unsure on the government website and on the school website.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards

Ms T Koser, Acting Headteacher

