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THE CAREY FEDERATION



Halwill Primary School
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Monday 6th December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Halwill School Update

As you can appreciate the COVID situation is ever changing and as I said in my letter to you yesterday, we continue to monitor the situation. Unfortunately, there have been further cases over the weekend. We have reported all to the DfE and Devon County Council as per protocol and we continue to follow DfE regulations.

I appreciate as parents you may feel alarmed by the numbers but I know we are certainly not the first school in the local area for cases to quickly increase. Please note the majority of cases are asymptomatic and **many of the cases have only come to light because parents followed our pre-emptive and proactive advice to test their children.**

As I wrote yesterday, **it is no longer lawful to close the school or to close bubbles.** This rule was changed by the Government in September 2021. It is not in my gift to make the decision to close the school. This can only happen if I am told to do so by either a Government decision or if advised by Devon County Council or Public Health England. I have spoken with the DfE today and I attach the advice received. I have also contacted Devon County Council and await further advice. Should the situation change, I will certainly inform you.

Thank you to the many parents who have recognised, the school has worked very hard since March 2020 to keep children and families safe, communicate promptly with parents and set high quality remote learning. All alongside giving high quality teaching and pastoral care to the children.

I understand that some parents have been voicing concerns in social media over the school's response to our latest national outbreak of COVID. Social Media is not a helpful place to share such concerns. First I may not see your concerns and secondly it may cause long term reputational damage to the school your children attend. Please, if you do have concerns on this or any other issue, raise it directly with myself via admin@halwill.devon.sch.uk.

What can you do next?

Test, test, test! Please regularly carry out LFD tests on your child.

If your child has had an LFD positive result, please ensure they have a PCR test. Please then email admin@halwill.devon.sch.uk a copy of the PCR record and also confirm the date their isolation ends.

Please avoid your child mixing outside of school with children from other families.

Please wear face coverings and keep your distance from each other at drop-off and pick-up. Staff have been wearing face coverings for a long time and will continue to do so.

Please see further advice in the attached DfE information.

What further measures are we taking?

In addition to reverting to bubbles, reintroducing the staggered start and ends to the day, the one-way system we are also minimising movement of adults in to the school and across the Federation

- Wild Tribe, Dance with Jess Squire and PE providers are cancelled until the end of term. Therefore, there will be no After School Club. If you have paid for these, this will transfer as a credit to next term.
- Both Alex Rogozinsky and Ruth Hayes music tuition will be cancelled until the end of term
- I will remain at Halwill and not move between the two schools
- All visitors have been cancelled
- All staff meetings and assemblies will be virtual

Cleaning Regime

We have maintained a high and rigorous standard of cleanliness throughout the pandemic. We have never stepped down hand washing but will certainly impress this again. The whole school is cleaned thoroughly with 'Invincible', daily, this includes tables and their under edges, pens, pencils and other equipment. Touch points, such as door handles and light switches are cleaned with 'Invincible' throughout the day. **'Invincible' is a product approved to kill COVID-19 and is also safe to use in schools.** If any parent would like to see the products we use, we will be happy to show you.

As we now know, COVID-19 is an airborne virus so classrooms always have windows and doors open and CO2 monitors are in place to check the air quality.

In our recent Health and Safety Audit, the inspector was very pleased with our measures for hygiene and particularly with COVID-19 procedures.

I thank you for your understanding at this very challenging time and wish you and your families well.

Keep safe,

Mrs Ruh Alford
Executive Headteacher

DfE Guidance Received for Halwill Primary School

We know that you may find this concerning but we are continuing to monitor the situation and are providing the following advice. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

The school setting remains open and your child should continue to attend as normal if they remain well. We encourage household members that are aged 11 and over to continue with twice weekly LFD testing to help identify cases promptly.

If you think your child is a close contact but has not have not been contacted directly by NHS Test and Trace then they should take a PCR test via [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by calling 119. **When ordering a PCR test it is important to check the box (online) or tell 119 'I've been told to get a test by my health protection team' and not 'I've been told to get a test by my school or nursery'**. Further guidance can be found at [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19

If your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known. If negative, the child can end self-isolation; if positive, the child should isolate until at least 10 days after their symptoms appeared. Symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough, or a high temperature, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia). If the child has a positive test result but do not have [symptoms](#), they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for a PCR test (the normally available test type) and this can be arranged via [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by calling 119.

Instructions for people who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 (tested positive or symptomatic awaiting a test result)

From 16 August, [you will not be required to self-isolate if you are a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19](#) and any of the following apply:

- you are fully vaccinated
- you are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Fully vaccinated means that you have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since you received the recommended doses of that vaccine.

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to let you know that you have been identified as a contact and check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. If you are not legally required to self-isolate, you will be provided with advice on testing and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19. Even if you do not have symptoms, [you will be advised to have a PCR test as soon as possible](#).

Any member of the household who is aged 18 years and 6 months or over and has only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine or has not received any dose of the COVID-19 vaccination will still be required to self-isolate as household contact of a someone with COVID-19 symptoms awaiting testing and someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Please read the [stay at home guidance](#) which provides information on this.

Household members who are not exempt from isolation as close contacts should not go to work, school/college/childcare/education setting or public areas, and exercise should be taken within the home. If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping or picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family. Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online. Household members staying at home for 10 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

You could be fined if you do not self-isolate following a notification by NHS Test and Trace. You may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the [NHS Test and Trace Support Payment scheme](#) if you are required to stay at home and self-isolate or you are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate.

Those who are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

Instructions for household contacts who are not required to self-isolate from 16 August

Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be infected with COVID-19 and pass it on to others. If you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 but you are not required to self-isolate, you can help protect others by following the [guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#). As well as getting a PCR test, you may also consider:

- limiting close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces
- wearing a face covering for those aged 11 and over in crowded places such as school/college/public transport
- limiting contact with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable
- [taking part in regular LFD testing](#)

You should follow this advice while the person in your household with COVID-19 is self-isolating.

If you are a health or social care worker or a student undertaking a work placement who has been identified as a household contact and are exempt from self-isolation, there is [additional guidance available](#) that you should follow to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in these settings.

If you develop [symptoms](#) at any time, even if these are mild, self-isolate immediately, [arrange to have a COVID-19 PCR test](#) and follow the [guidance for people with COVID-19 symptoms](#).

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>. If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- get vaccinated – everyone aged 18 and over can [book COVID-19 vaccination appointments](#) now and 16-17 year olds are being offered 1 dose of the vaccination by 23 August
- wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- wear a face covering if aged 11 and over when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: <https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

Further Information

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>