

# Shepherds Down School

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## COVID - 19 operating procedures:

Dear Parents/Carers,

We seem to have a surge in COVID-19 cases over the weekend, particularly in children, many of you may have been contacted today if your child has been a contact. Whilst so far, these are isolated cases in classes and the threshold level we have previously shared has not been reached, it is a concern. In light of this please may we remind you all of the procedures that we have in place and to clarify how you can help us, so that together we can keep everyone as safe as possible.

Should your child, present in school, with a dry persistent cough or a temperature (above 37.8) whilst they are in school we will contact you and ask you to collect your child as soon as possible and take them for a PCR test. They will need to remain at home until the result of the PCR test and will need to continue to isolate at home if the result is positive. I know how difficult it can be for children to tolerate PCR testing, however if your child has these symptoms and you cannot get a PCR result they will need to remain at home for the 10-day period.

Just to clarify, many of you are testing your children regularly with lateral flows, for which we are very grateful, as this is how some of the recent cases have been detected. **However, a Lateral flow test is not sufficient if your child has had close contact with a positive case or are showing COVID-19 symptoms.** If your child is symptomatic or has come into contact with a positive case, including within their household, it is a PCR test that they need, as this covers a wider spectrum of the virus and is far more reliable in detecting positive cases. A PCR test does not have to include a throat swab, a swab of both nostrils is sufficient in order to achieve a conclusive result and the process is no different to the lateral flow process (for those children that tolerate this) it is just the processing that is different. We have postal PCR tests in school that we can provide if you need one, it can be easier to do the test at home but it will take a bit longer for the results. If you have been asked to get a PCR and want to discuss this further with me please get in touch.

As a reminder these are guidelines that we continue to follow

- Ensure good hygiene for everyone - frequent and thorough hand cleaning and good respiratory hygiene for all.
- Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes - regular cleaning of areas and equipment, with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.
- Keep occupied spaces well ventilated - Opening windows, internal and external (where safe to do so), balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature. Continue to limit occupancy of small rooms where there is minimal ventilation possible.
- Remaining vigilant to symptoms - send home any child displaying any of the 3 main symptoms and request that they remain at home and get a PCR test.



- In the case of a positive result - your child will need to remain at home for 10 days from the onset of symptoms. If this is the case please let school know asap, so that we can support with remote learning and so we know that there is a positive case in the school, to keep abreast of a possible outbreak.
- Continue with Asymptomatic Testing - The vast majority of staff are carrying out twice weekly saliva tests or lateral flow tests. We would be grateful if you continue to do the same, within your household.
- Continue the end and beginning of the day arrangements - request that parents aim to drop and pick their child up just after the buses - just after 9am/3pm respectively.
- Continue to wear masks at the beginning and the end of the day - (we will review this at the end of September) and request that you support us with this by doing the same.
- If there is a positive case in your child's class - we will advise you to get a PCR test for your child but your child can continue to attend school during this time.
- If there are more than 2 cases within a 'group' where there will have been close contact - (which we are classing as a class) - we will contact Public Health and implement our contingency plan (See attached). This plan will include re-instating most of the restrictions we have previously had in place and if advised isolating the class with the cases.

Thank you for your continued support with this, I know it will be a concern to many of you. If you have any questions/ concerns about any of this please speak to me and I will be happy to discuss this further.

Take Care

Debby