

Shepherds Down School

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Headteacher: Mrs Debby Gooderham



10th September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been great to welcome back all the children after the Summer and some new children too. All the children are settling in well and most seem happy to be back, although many seem quite tired now!

Welcome

We would like to welcome some new children and their families to the school:

Tyler Martin, Max Jepson, Oliver Foyen-Dyer, Brogan Mohammad, Jusaud Urbina and Billy Heath in Skylarks
Evan Byrne and Muhammed Musab in Penguins
Shannon Cavanagh in Kingfishers
George Davies-Ber in Woodpeckers

I am sure you will join me in welcoming them all to the school. We also have new reception age children who will be starting over the coming weeks, we look forward to welcoming them and their families then.

COVID – 19 operating procedures:

I have now received some clarification on the current COVID-19 guidance for schools and wanted to share with you how we will be implementing this for the moment. These are our main operating procedures that we have in place at the moment to reduce the risk of COVID-19 within school. We will:

- **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 lateral flow tests and we hope to start Saliva testing from 16th September. We would be grateful if you continue to do the same if you are using Lateral Flow tests.
- **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.
- **In the case of a positive case within the school community – parent/staff** – we will let both parents and staff know that there is a positive case within school, however we will be preserving the anonymity of the case.



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- **If the positive case is 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. If you have any questions about any of this please speak to me and I will be happy to discuss this further.

Saliva Testing:

We have about 50 families signed up for their child to start Saliva testing this term. It is not too late for other families to access this and I would encourage you to give it a go if you feel your child would manage it. They have provided some very clear visuals and we would support your child to do this with further visuals if needed. The Saliva testing is more accurate than the Lateral Flow testing and picks up presence of the virus at all stages of the virus and does not require a confirmatory PCR.

For those families that have signed up for the testing the packs with the information and test tubes are being sent home today. The day of testing for this school has been allocated for Friday each week, and we will collect them in school from your child, ready for them to be picked up for testing.

If your household has previously been carrying out Lateral Flow tests and you have not signed up for Saliva testing then please continue to do those for the moment.

Contact Information and Care plans:

We are also sending home a copy of the contact information we currently hold for your child in school. Please can check this and make any necessary changes before returning it to school so we can ensure that we can contact you in the case of an emergency. Please don't forget to let us know of any changes to contact information throughout the year so that we can always contact you if needed.

In addition, can you also check that the medical information that the nurses have about your child is also correct and again make any changes and return this to school.

End of the day:

Whilst we have a slightly bigger car park now, it is still very busy at the end of the day. If you are picking your child up at the end of the day, please try and come just after the buses to avoid stopping the buses access and ensure you are not blocking them in when you park. This will enable us to load all the buses as quickly as possible and ensure that children arrive home at their expected times.

If you have any worries or concerns, or just want to discuss something further about your child at school, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always accessible by phone, or email and I am happy to meet you face to face aswell.

Have a good weekend!

Debby