

COLDWALTHAM, ST. JAMES' C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

with Chuckleberries Pre School

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Executive Headteacher: Mrs. Stephanie Gibson
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Learn, Discover, Achieve

31st March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are very nearly at the Easter holidays and I am sure that you are looking forward to them very much. With the easing of restrictions over this time, it will be a joy to be able to see family and friends again whom we may not have seen and to take part in activities that have been on hold for a while.

It is still, however, important to remain vigilant to the potential transmission of Covid-19 and we have been paying careful attention to procedures that the DfE are advising should be in place over the holiday period to ensure that the school community continues to stay safe and healthy.

Optional LFD testing of staff

In a change from the recent half-term holiday, it has been requested that all staff who have opted into the LFD testing programme should continue to take bi-weekly tests throughout the holidays and maintain reporting them online and to the schools they work for directly (an internal register is also kept of LFD results).

As has been mentioned previously, we are delighted that all of our staff have opted into the testing programme and we have been diligently testing and reporting our results regularly. Any of you who have tested for Covid-19 will know that it is not the most pleasant of experiences and we are very grateful to the staff for continuing to do this in order to ensure that our school remains virus-free and safe.

We will all be continuing with this over the holidays to make certain that we are fully informed about any potential cases and can take the necessary action should a positive test result occur.

Clarification regarding confirmatory PCR testing following a positive LFD test

In a change to previous guidance, the DfE have confirmed that NHS Test and Trace is reintroducing confirmatory PCR testing for positive LFD tests. This means that all staff, parents/carers and pupils who get a positive LFD test should seek a confirmatory PCR test immediately. This should be taken within two days of the positive LFD test.

Any person who has a positive LFD test and the members of their household should self-isolate immediately in line with [NHS Test and Trace guidance](#) whilst awaiting the PCR result. If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test and self-isolation can end.



Contact tracing over the Easter holidays

To support the NHS Test and Trace process, schools have been asked that a staff contact remains available for the first **six** days of the Easter holidays to fulfil necessary contact tracing responsibilities. This means that, as we are finishing face-to-face education on Thursday 1st April, staff and parents/carers (on behalf of themselves or their children) are required to contact the school about any positive test results up to **Wednesday 7th April**. Following this, NHS Test and Trace will take over the process of identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation.

The named contact for St. James' over the six days is **Mrs Lizzie Martin** who can be reached at hos@coldwalthamschool.com *Please do not email the school office as the emails will not be checked on a daily basis whereas the supplied email address will be.*

Once we approach the end of the holidays, staff and parents/carers (on behalf of themselves or their children) are required to report symptoms of the virus and/or positive test results if they occur **within two days** of returning to school. This means that you should use the above named contact and email address from **Saturday 17th April** to inform the school about anyone with symptoms and/or a positive test result.

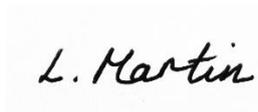
Test and Trace Support Payment for parents/carers

As a school, we are very aware of the financial impact that being advised to self-isolate may have on families. We are keen to make you aware that parents and carers of children who have been advised to self-isolate by their child's school or by NHS Test and Trace are now able to apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary payment of £500, **if they meet the eligibility criteria**. The payment ensures parents/carers receive the financial support they need if they are unable to attend work due to childcare responsibilities.

Applications for the Support Payment need to be made **via the local authority in which you live**, not the school's local authority. To claim the payment, you would need a letter from your child's school to provide as evidence of the school requesting you to self-isolate. The local authority would contact the school to verify the information you provide about your child as part of the process of confirming whether you are eligible for a payment. You can see the full eligibility criteria for the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme and find out how to apply [here](#). We hope that you will explore the possibility of the support payment should you feel that you meet the eligibility criteria.

Through supplying this information, we hope that we will be able to continue to keep our school safe and healthy as restrictions are eased and we begin to socialise with others more. We wish you a very happy Easter break and look forward to seeing the children when they return on **Tuesday 20th April**.

Kind regards,



Mrs Lizzie Martin
Head of School