



Mill Road • Okehampton
Devon • EX20 1PW



admin@okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk
www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk

@OkehamptonCollege
@OkehamptonCC



+44 (0)1837 650910

Friday 10 December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing further to our letter of [29 November](#) to update you again about the COVID-19 cases in school, further to the latest risk assessment we have carried out last week with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and further to the [Prime Minister's statement on Wednesday evening](#), where he confirmed the move to plan B COVID restrictions following the spread of the Omicron coronavirus variant in the UK.

COVID-19 cases in the College

As of writing we have 27 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the College, amongst students and staff. A further 5 students and staff are awaiting the results of PCR tests after testing positive through their asymptomatic LFD tests. As always, we offer the staff, students and families affected our warmest wishes and unequivocal support. We also want to reassure you that all students and staff who test positive, or who have symptoms, are isolating, and we continue to remain open. Providing your child remains well, they can of course continue to attend school.

Monitoring and mitigating against virus transmission

As you know, we have already invoked a series of mitigating measures from our [COVID-19 Outbreak Management plan](#), and beyond, given the outbreak we have endured this term in our community. We continue to work alongside public health experts from the UKHSA and the South West Health Protection Team in risk assessing the ongoing local situation and given the continued high number of cases in neighbouring communities of [Torridge](#) and [North Devon](#), we are maintaining the key measures and actions we already have in place, which we outline for you again at the end of this letter.

In addition to this, and further to the [Prime Minister's statement on Wednesday evening](#), and subsequent [DfE advice to schools](#), we are reinforcing and strengthening some of the measures we have in place leading up to the Christmas break. We draw your attention to:

- All students and staff must wear face coverings in communal areas, unless exempt. Whilst we have supplies of disposable face coverings in school, we would be grateful if you could provide your child with such.
- Visitors to schools will be kept to a minimum. Any visitor who does not normally work at the College will be asked to take a Lateral Flow Device test before visiting the College, and to prove they have done so within a 24-hour period and received a negative result (NHS notification). We will not permit entry if this condition is not met.

Thank you very much, again, for your ongoing support and cooperation. Please do remember to continue to report LFD test results to us via [this form](#), and inform us of details regarding any PCR positive case via [this form](#). And of course, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any concerns and/or require any further information, clarification, advice, or support.

We will write briefly again next week to confirm arrangements for our return to school in January, including details about the requirement for students to take one LFD test on-site at the start of term in our asymptomatic test site.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Craig Griffiths and Rebecca Mullins. The signature of Craig Griffiths is on the left, followed by a period, and the signature of Rebecca Mullins is on the right.

Craig Griffiths and Rebecca Mullins
(Associate Principals).

Key Actions to mitigate against coronavirus transmission

- **All students and staff must wear face coverings in communal areas, unless exempt.**
- All students must adhere to the one-way system of movement within corridors.
- If travel to College is by coach or taxi, students should clean hands before boarding, wear face coverings, and should sit next to other students in their year, or siblings.
- Meetings will be undertaken remotely or in well-ventilated spaces with assured social distancing.
- **Any visitor who does not normally work at the College will be asked to take a Lateral Flow Device test before visiting the College, and to prove they have done so within a 24-hour period and received a negative result. Entry to the College will not be permitted if this condition is not met.**
- Educational visits will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with any event that is given the go-ahead requiring participants to take a LFD test the day before.
- All students and staff to take LFD tests at home twice a week.
 - ⇒ Please report results, whether positive or negative, to us via [this form](#).
 - ⇒ If the LFD test is positive, the person should isolate and a PCR test should be [arranged](#) and taken within 2 days ⇒ If the PCR test is positive, or if a PCR test is not taken within 2 days of the LFD test, the person must isolate for 10 days (day 1 is the day after the positive LFD test). If the PCR test is taken within 2 days and is negative, the person can return to school.
- If a student or adult in the school believes they are a contact of someone who has tested positive, they should arrange and take a PCR test. (See the notes below.)
- If a student tests positive via a PCR test, we will inform possible contacts to advise them that they should arrange and take a PCR test. (See the notes below.)
 - ⇒ Parent/carers [complete this form](#) to confirm that their child has tested positive via a PCR test and to identify any person with whom their child may have mixed closely.
 - ⇒ We will then contact (by email) the families of any student identified through this form as a possible contact and advise them accordingly.
- Close contacts of suspected or confirmed Omicron cases, must isolate for 10 days regardless of their vaccination status. (We are of course unable to identify the variant through our contact tracing; any such contacts will be informed by NHS Test and Trace.)
- Any student or adult in the school who is a contact of someone who has tested positive and has taken a PCR test that returns a negative result, should take a LFD test daily for 7 days.
 - ⇒ This includes any student or adult who believes they are a contact of someone who has tested positive, or any student or adult whom we have contacted to advise that they are.
- Indoor occupied spaces will be kept well ventilated, with CO₂ monitors installed in classrooms to identify if ventilation needs to be improved.
- **Notes**

A student who believes they are a contact of a positive case, or who has been identified by the school or NHS Test & Trace as a possible contact of a positive case, can still attend school while they await the results of their PCR test — unless the variant is the Omicron variant, when the student must isolate for 10 days.

Anyone who has already tested positive for COVID-19 should not undertake any test within 90 days of their positive test unless they exhibit any new coronavirus symptoms.