



# Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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## Update on Covid Precautionary Measures

Dear Parents and Carers,

First of all, a very Happy New Year to you and your families. I hope that 2022 brings you all health and happiness.

As you know, the guidance to schools around measures in place to mitigate against the spread of infection changes regularly and I thought I would update you with the latest situation. Do remember that things can change quite quickly.

### **Covid symptoms**

The main indicators of Covid are: a high temperature, a new continuous cough, loss of sense of taste or smell. **If your child experiences any of these symptoms they must self-isolate and book a PCR test.** Please do not send them to school as they will be sent home. Feedback from our school community is that many people experience 'cold-like' symptoms such as feeling achy or having a headache over a long period. We recommend booking a PCR test in these circumstances too.

### **Home testing**

Pupils and staff should conduct home Covid tests at least twice per week and daily if anyone in their household has Covid symptoms or has tested positive. If you test positive on an LFD you need to self-isolate. **From Tuesday 11th January you no longer need to book a PCR test to confirm a positive LFD test.**

### **Self-isolation**

Pupils must self isolate if they experience symptoms or test positive for Covid on either a PCR test or a home LFD test. If a PCR test comes back as negative then they can come out of isolation.

**Pupils should self-isolate for 10 days unless they test negative on a home LFD on day 6 and day 7.** If both of these are negative then they can come out of isolation on day 7. If one or both is

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positive then they need two consecutive days of negative tests before they can come out of isolation. If your child is returning to school earlier than 10 days as a result of 2 consecutive negative tests then please inform the school by texting the absence number: 07860 095596. If a pupil takes their test early in the morning of day 7 and it is their **second consecutive** negative test then they can come to school on that day. We will require confirmation of this from parents/carers before pupils are admitted back into lessons.

Anyone self-isolating can come out of self-isolation after day 10, regardless of whether they have tested positive on an LFD, so long as they do not have a high temperature.

### **Household isolation**

If someone in your household tests positive or has symptoms of Covid then the rest of the household does not have to self-isolate so long as they are under 18 years, 6 months or have been fully vaccinated. However, all members of the household should test themselves daily for 7 days using a home LFD.

### **Face coverings**

All pupils should continue to wear masks in communal areas and also in class and in the exam hall (unless they are exempt). Please ensure that your child brings a mask into school with them each day. We appreciate that wearing a mask all day can be uncomfortable so pupils may remove their mask temporarily in a classroom or in an exam if they feel discomfort. Teaching staff may also ask pupils to temporarily lower their masks to aid communication in the classroom or around school. Masks do not need to be worn outside and we strongly recommend that pupils use our outdoor spaces, including the covered area, at break and lunchtime. The guidance on face coverings is due to be reviewed at the end of January.

### **Ventilation**

We are fortunate in having CO2 monitors in all classrooms and they enable staff to balance keeping rooms well-ventilated against maintaining a comfortable temperature for work. We will continue to monitor this but the school is well heated and rooms were of a comfortable temperature last term. We do not plan to permit the wearing of hoodies or jumpers at this stage.

### **Other measures**

- Pupils must avoid communal areas indoors unless they are travelling to/from classrooms for lessons. They should not congregate in corridors or stairwells or in groups outside form rooms. Outside lesson time pupils should stay in their form room, the Dining Hall or go outside. This will greatly reduce the number of contacts pupils have in the day and so reduce the risk of infection.
- Only essential visitors will be allowed to come into school; wherever possible meetings will be postponed or held remotely.

- Pupils should sanitise their hands on arrival at school and in each lesson.

### **Work for self-isolating pupils**

Work will be set for pupils who are self-isolating on our online platform, Google Classroom. If your child is not unwell after testing positive for Covid, it is expected that they keep up with their lessons so that they can access the curriculum alongside pupils who are in school. Teaching staff will endeavour to set the work as close to the lesson time as possible, but there may be a delay sometimes with posting material due to staff workload. Staff will not be able to significantly adapt lesson resources for pupils at home if they are delivering live lessons to the year group in school. It is not practical to expect staff to set up 'live' Google Meets for pupils who are working at home at the same time as delivering an on site lesson.

### **Contingency plans for school closures**

I will do everything that I can to keep school open for all pupils. However, there were times last term when staffing became very difficult due to the large number of staff having to self-isolate. It has been very difficult to recruit agency staff and there have been times when we are only able to cover lessons by asking our staff to work additional hours. I am mindful of the impact this has had on our staff and their own wellbeing and work-life balance.

We are therefore making contingency plans for a scenario where we cannot fully staff the school. My priority will always be to maintain on-site teaching for Year 11 and 6th Form. As far as possible I will also aim to keep Year 7 in school. If remote learning becomes necessary then we will operate this on a rota system with one or more year groups working at home each day. I would hope to minimise working remotely to one day per week for each year group, though this will depend on staff availability. We will notify parents/carers at least one day before any year groups have to work at home and will aim to make provision for vulnerable pupils on site where we can.

Thank you for your patience and support with all that we are doing. I know that there are a range of views about the extent to which such measures should be implemented but feel that what we are doing as a school strikes an appropriate balance.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Wood  
Headteacher