

Foreland Fields School
Newlands Lane
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Kent
CT12 6RH
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Headteacher: Adrian Mount

22nd November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to provide an update regarding how the school continues to be affected by the COVID-19 virus. In addition, I will be sharing dates and arrangements for upcoming Christmas events. I hope many of you will be able to come along to the school to celebrate with us over the next few weeks.

COVID-19

Since September, the school has been affected by COVID-19 like never before. Whilst, in the vast majority of cases, the vaccination programme has proved effective in preventing serious illness, the threat of the virus remains and continues to affect normal operation of the school. We have seen unprecedented numbers of staff absent, which has led to us running, on some days, with substantially reduced staff. Whilst we have, and continue to, prioritised the attendance of pupils/students, and have been somewhat creative in ensuring that this situation causes little disruption to their education, when numbers have proved too low for us to provide adequate, and safe, cover we have been forced into the position of asking that some pupils/students remain at home. This is done on a rota basis to ensure that no child's attendance is affected more than others. Can I please thank all parents/carers who have been affected for their understanding and for being so supportive. In cases where pupils are asked to remain at home, we will continue to offer remote sessions – class teachers will contact parents/carers with details. In addition, there are a number of online resources available which are detailed on our website.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure we do not become complacent with regards to the virus. We have a number of pupils/students who could become very unwell were they to contract COVID-19 therefore, we need to ensure we do everything we can to keep them, and our whole school community, safe.

We continue to consult with the DfE and the Health Protection Team who provide us with advice and guidance. In the event that cases continue to rise, we may be forced to instigate our contingency procedures which could include temporarily reinstating face coverings and/or reducing class sizes.



Can I again ask that any child who is showing any symptoms of the virus does not attend school. If able to, symptomatic pupils should take a PCR test and not return to school unless the test comes back as negative or they have isolated for the required period – 10 clear days from the onset of symptoms. The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- High temperature – this means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure temperature).
- New, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

You may also be aware that there have been reports within the mainstream news that many people testing positive have presented with symptoms such as a really bad cold, headache, sore throat or runny nose so we do ask that all parents/carers remain alert to this.

In line with current guidance, we ask that all secondary students, who are able to, continue to take twice weekly Lateral Flow Device tests, 3 to 4 days apart. Should any parent/carer require home test kits please let us know. Alternatively, test kits can be ordered online and collected from any participating pharmacy. Parents/carers should share their child's results with their class teacher via ClassDojo or the home school contact book.

Vaccination

We have been informed this morning that the in-school vaccination of 12-17 year olds will happen at school on 15th December. We will be in touch with parents regarding arrangements for this.

Upcoming Events

It was great seeing so many families and friends at our recent firework event.

We are moving ahead with our Christmas activities however, please be aware that there may be some changes to these should COVID-19 cases rise.

You should all receive a letter within the next few days regarding your child's Christmas production/concert. Can we please ask that you use the return slip to indicate if you, and other family members, will be attending as this will assist us in ensuring that these events can go ahead in a Covid-secure way.

Children will be having Christmas dinner on 14th December. Though this will not be a whole school event in the hall, we will ensure that the day is special for all children. Who knows, there may also be a visit from a certain Mr Claus!



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The school Christmas fair will be held on Wednesday 15th December from 1pm. This event will be a little different this year in that it will be an outdoor event.

Pupils/students will sell items to be purchased from their classroom outdoor areas. At 1.45pm, there will be a carol concert held around the Christmas tree in the rear garden area. Sue Yardley, one of our Key Stage 4 teachers, will be bringing along her oompah band to provide the music.

Our Garlinge pupils will be coming over to the Foreland Fields site for the fair. We are arranging with transport providers that they are picked up from Foreland Fields at the end of the day. Obviously, parents/carers who attend can take their child home with them once the fair is over should they wish to.

There may need to be some changes to this in the event of bad weather, but we remain positive that this will run as planned – just make sure you wear warm clothing and bring along your singing voice!

We will be holding a whole school assembly, in the main part virtually, on Friday 17th December, which is also our Christmas jumper day when we invite all pupils/students and staff to come to school wearing their festive knits. This is also the last day of Term 2 when the pupils/students break up for Christmas. School will end at the normal time of 2.50pm.

I was really hoping that the virus would be having less of an impact on our school by now however, I hope that you can see that we are doing everything we can to continue to come together to celebrate as a community.

Please be assured, nothing is more important to us than your children and we will continue to go above and beyond to offer them the standard of education and care you have come to expect from us.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Mount
Headteacher

