



Care, believe, achieve together!

Cockfield Primary School,
Front St,
Cockfield,
Bishop Auckland
DL13 5EN
Telephone: 01388718263
Email: cockfield@durhamlearning.net
Headteacher: Mrs K Costello

27th February 2022 COVID Update

Dear parents and carers,

Firstly, welcome back from the half term break, we are really looking forward to seeing everyone tomorrow. As you know the Government announcement last Monday demonstrated that there is increasing confidence that the country is moving from a pandemic to living and dealing with COVID-19.

Guidance for schools followed the next day, and has been further updated throughout the week. The [guidance for parents and carers](#) has also been updated for your reference. As the scientists acknowledge, the virus hasn't gone away, and I want to reassure you that your child's safety has been at the forefront of our decision making throughout this situation and will continue to be our primary considerations going forwards, along with our duty of care to them, the staff and the wider community.

The [school's guidance](#), and the 20+ documents, that inform our update, show a shift from the word must (legally binding) to should (strongly advised). Using that guidance, a number of operational changes in school will take place:

Attendance – staff and pupils

Attendance is mandatory for all and it is a priority. Critically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and vulnerable staff and children will attend school.

No need for limited mixing or bubbles Children will be able to be grouped flexibly and mix freely.

Safe Hygiene

Children will continue to sanitise their hands regularly throughout the day. Tissues and lidded bins are in each classroom so that children can 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. Please continue to encourage this at home.

Staff

Staff have been twice weekly testing since January 2021 as directed by the DfE but, moving forward, this has now stopped as the DfE has stopped sending LFD test kits into primary schools. They will test should they feel unwell, as a proactive measure if LFD tests continue to be readily available privately. Staff will not need to wear masks or visors in classrooms or corridors, but may choose to at other times, as a personal choice.

If your child is unwell

Please do not send your child to school if they have a temperature or are unwell at all. This is for the safety of everybody. If your child becomes ill whilst at school, you will



Care, believe, achieve together!

Cockfield Primary School,
Front St,
Cockfield,
Bishop Auckland
DL13 5EN
Telephone: 01388718263
Email: cockfield@durhamlearning.net
Headteacher: Mrs K Costello

be asked to collect them immediately. Please ensure that contact details are up to date with the office of another person who can collect your child. If they display symptoms of COVID-19 they will be isolated until you arrive. You should then make arrangements for them to be tested, using a PCR or LFD. School should be informed of the result as soon as possible.

A positive result will mean that the child will need to isolate for up to 10 days, following the latest NHS guidance and Government self-isolation advice.

Currently, if your child is unwell with other symptoms you can LFD test them and should this be positive you do not need to go for a PCR but may choose to. Your child should self-isolate in this case for up to 10 days, or in line with the guidance previously sent out.

The Government are keen that everybody continues to respond positively with the track and trace system. Schools are not legally bound to do this, but I will keep you informed of cases if they start to increase beyond a small number across the school.

If the LFD is negative, we would ask that your child does not return until they are 'well'. I will monitor guidance, as we know that this will no doubt change in the coming weeks. Know the symptoms of Covid-19

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a recent onset of any of the following

: a new continuous cough

a high temperature

a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Other symptoms linked with COVID-19 include shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle ache, sore throat, headache, stuffy or runny nose, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting. Any of these symptoms may also have another cause.

Isolation

The guidance indicates that whilst the law has changed, the directives for public safety remain. We will follow this guidance, so isolation continues to be up to 10 days, unless you have 2 negative tests on day 5 and 6, 24 hours apart. Isolation will finish after day 5 at the earliest if you test first thing in the morning on day 5 and 6.

'Children and young people with COVID-19 should not attend their education setting while they are infectious. They should take an LFD test from 5 days after their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms) followed by another one the next day. If both these test results are negative, they should return to their educational setting if they normally attend one, as long as they feel well enough to do so and do not have a temperature'.



Care, believe, achieve together!

Cockfield Primary School,
Front St,
Cockfield,
Bishop Auckland
DL13 5EN
Telephone: 01388718263
Email: cockfield@durhamlearning.net
Headteacher: Mrs K Costello

Please continue to liaise with the school office about your child's return date after testing positive, given our school protocols. We will review this as and when the guidance is further updated. It is very important that these isolation procedures are followed by staff and children so that the risk of transmission is kept to a minimum.

We have been very fortunate not to have many serious cases amongst staff and children, however, some of our staff who have tested positive have experienced severe enough symptoms to be unable to work for at least a week. If we increase the risk of infection further by allowing children and staff into school whilst still possibly infectious, we increase the risk of further staff absences.

Close contact changes

The new guidance has brought an end routine contact tracing. Close contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily LFD tests for 7 days. Staff, children and young people should attend their education settings as usual.

'Children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has COVID-19 should continue to attend the setting as normal '.

Possible further disruption to schooling

It is almost guaranteed now that schools will remain open, but there is the very real chance that there may be further disruption to 'schooling' for individual children who need to isolate or are unwell. Please remember that home learning will only be provided if your child tests positive for Covid-19 and is well enough to access work. If this is the case, please contact the school office who will endeavour to provide this at the earliest opportunity.

Any moves to remote learning for full classes will be communicated if this is directed by Public Health, however I think this is very unlikely.

If cases rise across the school additional measures may need to be reintroduced to reduce transmission including face coverings during drop off and pick up, reduced mixing of classes, suspension of collective worship and after school clubs for example. If these measures are needed I will inform you as soon as possible.

We thank you, as always, for the support you have given us whilst on this journey. Again, I assure you that whatever happens and wherever this journey continues to take us, we will always have our whole school community's very best interest at heart.

As ever, if you have any questions about any of the above please contact me via the school office cockfield@durhamlearning.net

Kind regards,

Kathryn Costello (Headteacher)