

New Siblands Primary
Gillingstool
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2EG
Tel. 01454 866754



Valuing every child through fostering independence,
inclusion, trust, respect and support

New Siblands Secondary
Easton Hill Road
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2JU
Tel. 01454 862888

Headteacher: Ms Carrie Osmond

Wednesday 5th January

Re: Covid update

Dear Parents & Carers,

I hope that you have all had a safe and happy Christmas break and are ready for the return to school tomorrow. You will be aware of lots of COVID updates and news so I am writing to clarify changes to isolation rules and to update you on how we will be working at New Siblands.

COVID symptoms

As ever, please help us to keep our vulnerable pupils safe and do not send your child to school if they have COVID symptoms. These are a new persistent cough, a high temperature or a loss of taste or smell. Anyone with these symptoms needs to self-isolate and have a PCR test.

Lateral flow testing (LAT tests). See diagram at the end of this letter

These tests are designed to detect COVID in people who do not have any symptoms. If your child is able to tolerate these tests, twice weekly testing is requested. At present, if your child receives a positive result on a LAT test, they will need to self-isolate and go for a PCR test to confirm the result. After Tuesday 11th they will just go into self-isolation, without the need for a PCR test.

We currently have a good supply of tests at school and you can request for some to be sent home with your child if you need them.

Self-isolation

When someone has a positive result on their PCR test (or LAT test from Tues 11th) they need to self-isolate for 7 days. On Day 6 and Day 7 they can take LAT tests (24 hours apart) and if both of these are negative, they can end the isolation on Day 8. School will ask to see confirmation of the negative result before pupils return to school.

Contact with COVID cases

Fully vaccinated people who have had contact with a confirmed case can increase to daily LAT testing to avoid self-isolation. If results are negative they can continue to attend school / work.

Infection control measures

The following control measures continue to be very important in helping to reduce the spread of infection:

- Hand hygiene
- Respiratory hygiene
- Twice weekly LAT tests
- Face coverings
- Avoiding 'gatherings' wherever possible

A member of



DfE School Number 803/7031
enquiries@newsiblands.org.uk
www.newsiblands.org.uk



New Siblands Primary
Gillingstool
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2EG
Tel. 01454 866754



Valuing every child through fostering independence,
inclusion, trust, respect and support

New Siblands Secondary
Easton Hill Road
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2JU
Tel. 01454 862888

Headteacher: Ms Carrie Osmond

School operations

School operations will be kept under review. At present we will continue to operate in much the same way as we were before the holidays. Pupils will remain in their bubbles. We will continue with 'Friendly Friday' outside playtimes, when pupils from different bubbles can mix.

There will need to be some changes:

- We will resume virtual assemblies instead of gathering together inside
- Only outdoor trips will be permitted
- We will allow essential visitors e.g. social workers, clinics etc. All essential visitors must be planned and must wear PPE
- We will not allow non-essential visitors on site
- Meetings will be virtual, unless there are exceptional reasons
- There will be some increases in staff wearing face coverings

Face coverings

There are new temporary measures from the DfE that recommend that secondary pupils *should* wear face coverings in class, when moving around corridors or indoor spaces and on school transport. Primary aged pupils should not be asked to wear face coverings. All staff *should* wear face coverings when moving around corridors or indoor spaces.

At New Siblands we have always adopted a sensitive approach to the wearing of face coverings, and have not asked any pupil who feels unable to wear a mask to do so. We are also conscious of the impact that wearing a face covering will have on communication. We will **not** therefore be asking any pupils to wear face coverings unless they choose to do so.

We are also fortunate enough to have spacious buildings with wide corridors, and our current operations mean there are no times when the corridors are full of people all moving together at once. So the only time we will be instructing staff to wear masks is at the beginning and end of the day on the secondary site, where we sometimes experience bottlenecks in the reception area. This is not the case on the primary site where arrivals and departures are managed differently, and there is more room. We hope that this will mean that we can maintain very high levels of communication with our pupils, who need to see our faces at most times. Of course, some members of staff may choose to wear face coverings at other times or have a specific class risk assessments that require higher levels of PPE.

We will keep our approach to using face coverings under review and inform you of any changes.

Staffing

Inconsistencies in staffing due to the impact of COVID are likely to continue. We will make every effort to get cover and keep all classes open. However, there may be times when we do not have sufficient staffing to maintain this. At these times we will endeavour to keep the maximum number of pupils in school each day. If we should need to ask pupils or classes to stay at home, we will inform you at the earliest opportunity. Supported home learning will be provided during periods

A member of



DfE School Number 803/7031
enquiries@newsiblands.org.uk
www.newsiblands.org.uk



New Siblands Primary
Gillingstool
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2EG
Tel. 01454 866754



Valuing every child through fostering independence,
inclusion, trust, respect and support

New Siblands Secondary
Easton Hill Road
Thornbury
South Gloucestershire
BS35 2JU
Tel. 01454 862888

Headteacher: Ms Carrie Osmond

when pupils are at home for whatever reason. School has felt very well supported by you all at times when we have had staffing shortages, and we are very grateful to you all for your understanding.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming everyone back tomorrow and hearing about their Christmas holidays. Happy New Year to everyone.

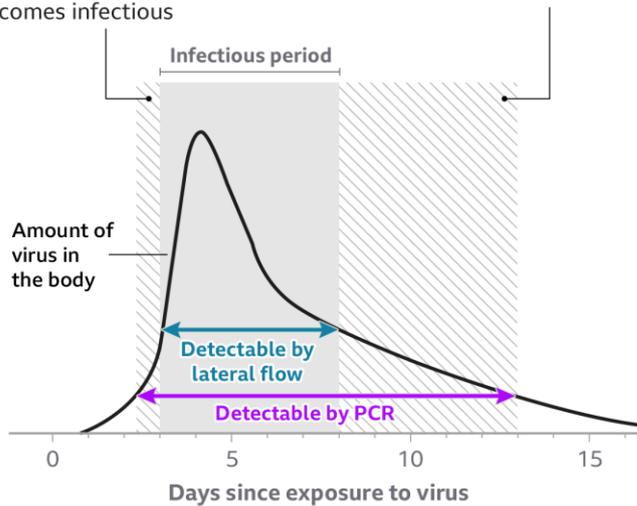
Yours sincerely,

Carrie Osmond

How lateral flow tests and PCR tests differ

PCR tests can detect Covid earlier than **lateral flow tests** - often before a person becomes infectious

PCR tests can also detect a Covid infection for several days after the infectious period



Source: Rethinking Covid-19 test sensitivity, New England Journal of Medicine **B B C**

A member of



DfE School Number 803/7031
enquiries@newsiblands.org.uk
www.newsiblands.org.uk

