



# Christ Church Primary School



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## CHRIST CHURCH RESPONSE TO POSITIVE COVID CASES

JUNE 2021

### **How Is Christ Church Managing the Current Increase in Cases Locally?**

The combination of reduced restrictions In May, a sunny half term and a highly transmittable variant have been the perfect storm for schools locally. We have always continued with our protective measures, but will not be able to relax any restrictions as we previously planned to do throughout the summer term. Our updated risk assessment is published on our website under the IMPORTANT INFORMATION / COVID tab should you wish to see more about how we are managing our protective measures.

### **What Does Christ Church Do When Informed of a Positive Case?**

We are reliant upon families keeping children off school and arranging for a test if they appear unwell. Any child presenting with illness in school will be isolated and parents contacted, advising them to get the child tested if needed.

When a test is positive, we ask families to email the school office with COVID in the subject box. We have responded to these emails at all times of day and night, every day for 16months now, as the quicker we act, the quicker we can restrict the spread of COVID in the school.

We are incredibly grateful for parents informing us promptly and for Mrs Baker who monitors the account vigilantly with me. Once received we begin a process of tracing those staff and pupils the positive case has been in contact with. Whilst I complete the necessary paperwork, our Assistant Head Teachers and office staff begin telephoning parents individually so we can ensure they receive the message and can offer reassurance and guidance. I prepare letters to go to families of close contacts and a general school information letter; these are all standard PH information documents, which we adapt to personalise for our school

The areas the positive case has been in contact with are closed and a deep cleaning process begins. We review our Risk Assessments to see if there is anything further we need to do and we contact Wirral LA to notify them. Wherever possible we try to trace back the first symptoms so we can discuss potential transmission routes with Public Health.

### **How Does Christ Church Identify Close Contacts?**

When notified of a positive case we ring the staff member or pupil's family and ask when symptoms occurred, when the test was taken, if there has been any contact outside school with any of our community and see if we can offer support to those who are positive and may feel unwell or anxious.

We keep daily seating plans and lists of groups so we can determine who needs to isolate and who can continue to come into school. The difficulty with COVID is that it is airborne, so even if a child has not been within 2m distance, there is a possibility they may still have caught the virus and at this time we are closing full class bubbles because of the high level of transmission amongst young people.



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As you can imagine, it is also very difficult to stop young children getting closer than 2m when they play together and we would not want children's experience in school to be any more rigid than it already has to be. Children are social; they learn and develop socially and it is important that when they have missed so much contact externally they do have social opportunities in school. Closing the full bubble hopefully stops the virus spreading any further and ensures we do not miss any contacts when tracing.

With the current variant, we would only isolate small groups of adults and children if we could be absolutely sure they had no wider contact.

## **Why Doesn't Christ Church Share the Details of the Positive Case with Families?**

We have been asked recently why we don't identify the positive case so that outside of school parents know who they can mix with. The simple answer to this is that it is medical information and would be a breach of data protection.

Sometimes a staff member asks me to inform their class if they are unwell with COVID19, particularly if they have been absent for a long time as it helps children and families understand. Families are generally very concerned about their child being identified so we never do; we support, care and offer advice wherever we can for families and staff members. Children and parents may choose to share information privately, but that is their decision; all we would ask is that those families who are isolating take it seriously and do not mix with others.

Our families involved have followed this brilliantly and we are grateful to them.

## **What Can Parents and Carers do to Help?**

Please do not send your child into school if they are unwell - ***if in doubt get them tested***. Know that the symptoms we are seeing are beyond the usual three main COVID symptoms (temperature, new or persistent cough, loss of taste / smell) – we have had positive cases reported with symptoms of sore throat, headache, upset stomach, those similar to hay fever and generally feeling under the weather. If your child is unwell, please do not send them into school or continue to attend clubs and events, as this is how the virus spreads.

Unfortunately, we will never be able to identify every person who is contagious as they can spread the virus for 2 days prior to having any symptoms or in the case of our recent bubble closure, may have extremely mild or no symptoms at all. If your child is unwell, it takes 24 hours to receive the results of a test; one day can prevent the virus spreading to more of our community and reduce disruption for other pupils and their families.

Please don't try to work out "Who started it" or "Who is to blame" adults and children feel bad enough when they have COVID, they feel worse if others then get it. COVID19 is a Global pandemic; we know everyone is able to mix, attend work and leisure facilities in their daily lives, so whilst different variants are circulating, symptoms changing and numbers increasing nationally, there is a high probability that those in



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our community are carrying it. Support each other, follow the National and Local advice, work with school and act fast then you know you are doing everything you can.

Thankfully, adults and children recently affected have had mild cases or have felt unwell for a few days and then quickly returned to good health, but we want to stop the spread so please help us with this.

## Further Information

Please find links for families to access should they need more information, as always please do telephone or email our school office if you wish to discuss anything further.

## Links to book tests

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19-testing/covid-19-tests-people-who-do-not-have-symptoms>

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-people-who-have-symptoms>

## Track and Trace Information

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/coronavirus-updates/covid-19-testing-wirral-key-workers/local-covid-19-test>

## Isolation Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

## NHS advice

If you do develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS by phoning 111 or following this link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

*A Donelan*

*June 2021*