



MEADGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mascalls Way • Great Baddow • Chelmsford • Essex CM2 7NS

Tel: (01245) 259403

E-mail: admin@meadgate.essex.sch.uk • Website: www.meadgateprimary.com

Executive Headteacher: Mr. J. J. Figg

Dear Parents and Carers

Update on Covid-19 arrangements in primary schools from September 2021

Here is a summary of the latest approach from the government. There are three key changes:

- 1. Mixing and bubbles** - pupils will no longer be kept in segregated bubbles. This means that playtimes, lunchtimes and after-school clubs will return to normal.
- 2. Tracing close contacts** - close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace. Schools will no longer undertake contact tracing. This means that we will no longer be responsible for emailing you all regarding possible or confirmed cases of COVID-19 within your child's class.
- 3. Face coverings** – We are asking visitors to continue to wear a face covering inside the school buildings and thank you for doing so.

So, what will stay the same?

We will still be vigilant. Coronavirus hasn't gone away so there will still be a need for schools and pupils to follow these precautionary measures to minimise the spread of the virus:

- Testing of staff in primary schools remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools.
- Ensuring good hygiene including frequent and thorough hand cleaning and the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach.
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated (there will be lots of doors and windows open in every classroom and in the hall). Please consider this when your child is dressing for the school day.
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Schools have been told to prioritise the delivery of high-quality, face-to-face education to all pupils. The government's approach is to ensure all pupils receive their education with minimal disruption, hence the removal of bubbles etc.

Schools have been told to do everything they can to minimise the impact on education and attendance, so, if there are multiple cases we are allowed to introduce measures like:

Temporarily reintroducing face coverings and/ or restricting attendance as a short-term measure and only as a last resort.

What if a staff member or a pupil tests positive or has symptoms?

You MUST NOT come to school and the staff member or pupil must self-isolate straight away and get a PCR test (a test that is sent to the lab) as soon as possible if they have any of these 3 symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild: a high temperature/ a new, continuous cough/ a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

They should also self-isolate straight away if:

- They have tested positive for COVID-19 either according to a PCR test or a lateral flow device test – this means they have the virus. If they get a positive LFD test they should book a PCR test. A negative PCR test will override a positive LFD test.
- Someone they live with has symptoms or tested positive (unless you are not required to self-isolate – see below if this applies to you)
- They have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace following contact with someone who tested positive

PLEASE NOTE: Pupils should only self-isolate if they have symptoms or if they get a positive PCR or Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test. If a pupil develops symptoms or gets a positive LFD test they should book a PCR test. A positive PCR test cannot be overridden. If a pupil is asked to get a PCR test as a result of contact with a positive case they may continue to attend education until they get the result of their PCR back.

What will happen for people who have been in contact with positive cases?

Individuals ARE NOT REQUIRED to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 IF ANY of the following apply:

- If they are fully vaccinated/ if they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months/ if they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial/ if they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. They do not need to isolate while awaiting the PCR test. We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Staff who do not need to isolate, and children of primary school age who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal.

If none of the above applies, people should self-isolate as per the instructions from NHS Test and Trace.

Please be assured that at Meadgate Primary, whilst we are required to follow government procedures, we remain extremely mindful, vigilant and as flexible as we are allowed to be about your own family circumstances. If in doubt, just give us a call and we will do all we can to help and advise.