



PB/LL 22.10.20

COVID-19 Update New Measures

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we reach the end of our first half term back as a fully open school I wanted to write and thank you for all the help and support you have offered since September.

This is a very worrying, strange and unsettling time for everyone; not just from fear of becoming ill but also the financial and emotional strains that have been placed on families as we try to combat the virus and keep the economy and education going whilst protecting our health services.

You have been brilliant in getting your children to school, respecting the rules and restrictions we have had to impose, keeping your little ones away if they have needed a test, sharing information with us, asking for advice and generally being positive, supportive and brilliant. As a result our attendance figures are actually better than normal at 97.6% for the half term. This is an improvement of about 1.3% on this time last year. THANK YOU!

I am pleased and relieved to report that we have not had to close any “bubbles” and we have had no adults or pupils testing positive for the virus. This is a great achievement and I’m sure you can imagine the pressure and worry that trying to keep the virus at bay adds to the work of staff in school every day, especially when many of them are coming to school with vulnerabilities of their own and concerns for their own families. I want to thank them all publicly for the support they have given to me over this half term and the way they have all pulled together to get our school back to feeling like Bransgore Primary School again. It isn’t quite the same but it is as good as it can be under present restrictions. I am so proud of them all.

Our pupils? Well, they are incredible. They come in every day, positive, upbeat, happy and keen to see their friends, to learn and to participate. You should feel so proud of them all. You have done a great job getting them here every day and they are learning, socialising and catching up. We are back on track and it is thanks to a superb whole school community effort. Brilliant!

As you know the virus is on the rise again as predicted moving into the winter months. At the moment we are in a tier 1 (medium risk) area. This could change at any time and BCP area is already considerably higher than some other parts of Dorset/ Hampshire.

Therefore we have taken the decision to review our procedures to ensure that we can operate at full capacity for as long as possible. As a result there will be a few changes that we would like you to talk to your children about.

The key change will be that adults in school will now be required to wear a mask or face covering in some areas and during some parts of the school day. Staff will **not** be wearing face masks in classrooms nor when supervising children but they will wear them in areas where there is poor ventilation or where groups of adults gather, such as in the staff room and for meetings.



Obviously, children are now used to seeing adults wearing face coverings but it may still be unsettling or worrying to some little ones to see their trusted adults suddenly in a mask. We will be talking to all the children about this today but wanted to make you aware too in case they came home worried or scared. The key message is that nothing has changed and we are just trying to be even more careful so that we all stay safe, well and healthy. There is no requirement for children to wear masks and there is no more we need you to do other than be supportive and reassuring to your children.

From half term we will also be putting in some additional cleaning and sanitisation measures including additional cleaner hours and the use of a disinfecting “fogging” machine which means we can ensure rooms are fully sanitised on a regular basis.

The next part of this letter is in response to a few enquiries and questions we have recently received. I hope it helps clarify a few points. I do not claim any credit for this bit as I took most of this from an excellent letter sent out by our colleagues at Ringwood School yesterday, so thanks to them.

What should I do if my child has been in contact with someone that is self-isolating?

If your child has been in close contact with a person who is a confirmed case, we will notify you accordingly and ask your child to self-isolate for 14 days. If your child has been in close contact with someone that is self-isolating as a precaution (and has not yet tested positive) then your child will not need to self-isolate as it is most likely that the person who is self-isolating will be infectious whilst they are at home (should they develop the illness).

If my child is asked to self-isolate, do they need to keep self-isolating if they receive a negative test result?

If your child is asked to self-isolate because they have been in close contact with a confirmed case they must remain in self-isolation until the end of the 14 day period, **even if they test negative during the 14 days**. This is because even if you test negative you still may incubate the virus later in the isolation period.

Should I be worried about my child getting COVID-19?

For most children and a significant proportion of adults, COVID-19 appears as a mild illness that does not require any specific treatment. If in the rare case your child does develop more serious symptoms you should contact 111 for further advice.

How can I help to prevent COVID-19 spreading within the school?

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the school you should remind your child of the importance of good personal hygiene and social distancing.

You should try and ensure that they wash their hands before leaving home and on arrival back. You should also try and limit social gatherings outside of school in line with the current government guidance.



Most importantly you should not send your child to school if they have any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed below and instead arrange for them to be tested at the nearest testing centre.

What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature
- A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at

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

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

How can I help stop COVID-19 spreading in my community?

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID19

- Wear a face covering in indoor public spaces
- Keep 2 metres distance from people
- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards

Hampshire County Council has asked us to share the following important public health message with you and the attached poster:

Coronavirus infections are continuing to rise, and Hampshire is on 'Medium' COVID alert level. We need your help to stop the spread of the virus, so please continue following national public health guidance this half term. Remember 'hands, face, space' and the Rule of 6: which means no large gatherings indoors or outdoors. Let's all work together to Keep Hampshire Safe.

Thanks again for all you are doing to look after each other and our school community and for helping keep infection down and protect the NHS. Keep it up, you are doing an incredible job!

Kind regards,

Mr. Brown and the Bransgore School Team