

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER: MRS. S. FRASER

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: MRS. C. HORSLEY

Front Street, Stanley, Co. Durham. DH9 0NP
E.mail: stjs@stjs.bwcet.com

Tel: 01207 232624
Website: www.stanley-pri.durham.sch.uk

10th December 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Possible Omicron variant associated with our school

In consultation with the Public Health Team at Durham County Council, I am writing to advise you that we have been made aware of two cases of Covid-19 that are suspected to be the new Omicron variant within our school community.

These are not currently confirmed cases of the Omicron variant but are being treated as such whilst further testing and investigation is carried out.

As with confirmed and probable cases identified elsewhere in England, the two individuals are self-isolating and robust contact tracing has taken place to trace their contacts.

Your child **has not been identified** as a close contact.

However, it is important to remain alert to the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and to keep your child off school if they develop any symptoms or test positive.

As a precaution we are joining with the Public Health Team at Durham County Council and the UK Health Security Agency in advising that parents and carers, and their children, undertake a PCR test. You do not need to isolate while you await your results.

We have also been requested to ask parents and carers, and their children, to undertake daily lateral flow tests.

Details of how to access testing can be found online at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/covid19testandtrace>. We are also expecting a delivery of lateral flow tests in school on Monday.

I appreciate the mention of Omicron may be worrying but please be assured that there is currently no evidence to suggest this variant causes more serious illness than other strains of Covid-19.

Nevertheless, monitoring cases of Covid-19 in the community helps us gain a better understanding of how different variants spread.

School will be open as normal next week but with the existing control measures agreed with the council's Public Health Team remaining in place to minimise risk of transmission.



Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of taking sensible precautions to prevent the spread of Covid-19. These include:

- Regular handwashing and sanitising
- Wearing face coverings in most indoor settings
- Getting vaccinated as soon as you are eligible
- Meeting people outdoors wherever possible and ensuring rooms are ventilated if meeting inside

Thank you for your ongoing support. You have a vital role to play in this public health response to the pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Fraser
Executive Headteacher

In consultation with Public Health

