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**18th November 2021**

Dear parent/carer,

In recent weeks, we have seen an increase in our usual winter illnesses with many children and staff affected.

Due to the symptoms of the common cold and covid being so similar this is putting additional pressure on the Test and Protect team. We are keen to do everything we can in school to protect the children, staff and families and ease pressure on the NHS.

**The mitigations that remain in place are:**

* Our updated school risk assessment;
* The physical distancing requirements for all staff in our setting;
* The use of face coverings for staff in the primary department;
* The use of hand sanitisers throughout the school day;
* Daily hand sanitisation for all children and young people on arrival at school;
* One way systems throughout the school;
* Enhanced daily cleaning during the school day and further cleaning undertaken daily at the end of each day;
* Parents/carers continuing to be advised to avoid contact with other parents, children and young people at the school entrance, on the way to school, and after school as well as wearing face coverings;
* Careful monitoring to ensure the appropriate level of ventilation and adequate air flow throughout the building with CO2 monitors deployed, monitoring the level of CO2, and temperature in classrooms;
* Access to asymptomatic, lateral flow, testing kits twice a week for all school and early learning and childcare staff; and
* Essential visitors to schools only;

**Please see below for an extract from Shetland news:**

Ashleigh Barclay, health protection nurse specialist, said “We’re seeing the return of other respiratory illnesses as COVID-19 precautions relax, including RSV, rhinovirus (common cold virus) and parainfluenza (the virus that causes croup and other respiratory infections).

“That’s why it’s important to take steps to keep your child and others safe and healthy. If your child shows signs of being sick, keep them home from school/nursery to avoid spreading germs. You should keep your child home when they have any of the following symptoms: fever, diarrhoea, vomiting, cough/congestion.

**Following a recent PCR test, a staff member received the following advice:**

On receipt of a negative result, official isolation is over but it is imperative that those who have had temperatures remain home for 48 hours after symptoms have stopped as to reduce the circulation of respiratory infections going around in the community. This is putting a lot of pressure on the system.

If covid is circulating in your school/class, you are encouraged to come forward for testing with any cold symptoms, even if not the top three symptoms. You can complete the online form in that instance, but by doing so, it would start your household isolation. You would remain in isolation until receipt of a negative result. If the result is positive, a member of the team will contact you with advice.

While we have no active cases at Dunrossness at this time, but given the number of cases in Shetland, it may well affect us soon.

Thank you all for your continued patience and understanding. As always, if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours Sincerely



Ms Andrea Henderson

Head Teacher