



Headteacher: Mr Paul Newton

Deputy Headteacher: Mr Raj Kahlon

Email: [kelloe@durhamlearning.net](mailto:kelloe@durhamlearning.net)

Website: [www.kelloe.durham.sch.uk](http://www.kelloe.durham.sch.uk)

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## FOR PARENTS INFORMATION REGARDING ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Carers,

There has been a large increase in the number of children and young people in County Durham testing positive for COVID-19 and the highest case rates are in school age children. This is leading to spread of COVID-19 within families and into older age groups.

The increase in COVID-19 cases in children is disrupting their education, affecting schools and has an impact on the wider community.

We have received recommendations from Durham County Council's Public Health team and have decided to re-introduce the following measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school:

- All staff to socially distance when in communal areas and wear a face covering if social distancing is not possible
- We would ask parents to socially distance when dropping off/collecting children from school.
- Grouping of pupils in school by class or year group to reduce mixing – if children need to work with children from another class/year group for their educational benefit they will be socially distanced.
- Children will be grouped by class or year group to reduce mixing in the dining hall but these restrictions will not be enforced when the children are outside during lunch and break times.
- Educational visits and after school clubs will be risk assessed and school will make a judgement on an individual basis as to whether the visit or club can go ahead as planned or if changes/cancellation will need to be considered. These decisions will be made by assessing the educational benefit of the visit/club and balancing this against the risk of an increased chance of COVID-19 transmission.
- Unfortunately events where parents/carers are invited to attend, such as Christmas Performances, will have to be cancelled.
- Whole school events e.g., assemblies will be cancelled.
- Christmas parties and the Pantomime in school will still go ahead but classes will be grouped and socially distanced from each other.
- PCR testing for all adults and pupils if they are a close contact of a positive case in their household\*.
- Daily LFT testing at home for 7 days for any adult or pupil in key stage 2 (year 3) or above who is a household contact of a positive case and is exempt from isolation and continues to attend school. The testing of primary age pupils is at parental discretion. Testing should start from the day the household member has symptoms or if they don't have symptoms from when they tested positive\*.
- Additional attention will be given to ventilation, cleaning and respiratory and hand hygiene.

*\*Note: People who have tested positive with a PCR test within the last 90 days should not be encouraged to test unless they develop new symptoms*

Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

### **LFD Testing advice**

We would recommend you have a supply of LFD testing kits at home in the event you are requested to use them. You can order home testing kits to be delivered to your home here [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests).

Or you can collect LFD kits at Community Collect sites across the County. To find your nearest collection point please enter your post code here [maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk](https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk).

If you pick up tests from a pharmacy, you may be asked for a 'collect code' this helps the NHS match your details to the tests. To get a 'collect code' please visit [test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits](https://test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits).

Please register the result of your home test at [www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result).

### **What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19**

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

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child does develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known. Book a free PCR test at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) . If positive, your child should isolate for 10 full days after their symptoms appeared.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at [111.nhs.uk/](https://111.nhs.uk/) or by phoning 111.

If your child has a positive test result but does not have symptoms they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 full days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset.

You must always register the result of your home test at [www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result](https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result)

### **Help, support, and further information.**

To help you comply with the requirement to self-isolate, the County Durham Together Community Hub can provide access to essential supplies, financial support and emotional support as well as other services. Please visit [www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help](https://www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help) or call the Community Hub on 03000 260260 for further details.

There is also support available the coronavirus section via [durhamlocate.org.uk](https://durhamlocate.org.uk)

Finally, we would like to thank you for everything you've done to keep your family and community safe, and for your patience in continuing to support our school during this challenging time.

Kind regards,

Paul Newton  
Headteacher