

30th March, 2021

Dear Parent or Carer

Keeping St Matthew's COVID Safe

It has been a long winter and we are all hoping for a summer of seeing family and friends as the lockdown starts to lift. However, it is important to remember that the numbers of people testing positive for Covid in Trafford are higher now than they were when schools reopened last September. Unfortunately the pandemic is not over, so we still all need to be careful.

Even if you have been vaccinated, there is still a risk at the moment so please do take extra care not to put yourself or others at risk.

There are some key things we need you to know, and do to help us keep St Matthew's Covid secure.

Testing

There are two types of tests, the LFD or rapid test, and the PCR test. **It is important that these tests are used correctly.**

- **The LFD or rapid test** must only be used if the person being tested does **not** have any Covid symptoms; no new cough, temperature or loss of taste and smell. This test is to identify people who have no symptoms but have the infection. About 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others.

If a person tests positive with a LFD test, they must book a PCR test, and along with their household they must self-isolate immediately and contact school.

- **The PCR test** is the gold standard of tests and must be used if the person testing has;
 - any of the covid symptoms,
 - has had a positive LFD test or,
 - has been asked to test by the public health team, health professional or the school because of an outbreak.

You can get a test delivered to your home or by attending a testing centre, details of how to book can be found at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test. Test results are returned within 24-72 hours of taking the test.

If your child is unwell with any Covid symptom you must take them for a PCR test. If you have been advised to have a PCR test or have symptoms, please do not assume that a negative LFD test means you do not have Covid. The LFD test can report 3 in 10 tests as negative when they may be positive. We cannot have children and young people attending school when they have symptoms on the basis of a negative LFD test alone.

Expected childhood illness

We are aware that colds, tummy upsets and other usual childhood illnesses are circulating at the moment. Make sure you follow your school's processes for managing expected childhood illnesses, please do not send your child into school if they are not well enough to be there. Typically children can return back into school 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea.

If you are unsure discuss it with your school before taking your child to school.

We need to prevent any confusion between Covid and childhood illnesses. Please think carefully if someone in your home develops a Covid- like symptoms, even if you don't believe it is Covid. Please call school and discuss this before sending your child in, the advice most likely will be to book a test and/or have a discussion with GP.

Household testing for people without symptoms

Regular testing of people without symptoms is important to help stop the virus spreading and protect your loved ones. As lockdown restrictions gradually ease we all need to play our part to help protect each other.

Free tests are available for people who do not have Covid symptoms, (Asymptomatic LFD tests). People who live in the same house as nursery or school aged children (or staff), or are part of a childcare or support bubble are able to get LFD home testing kits. Tests should be done twice a week 3-5 days apart. You can get hold of these kits by;

- going to a collection point,
- ordering kits direct to your house.

Full guidance including how to order the kits can be found here: www.trafford.gov.uk/coronavirus.

School drop off and collection

When dropping off or collecting your child please remember to keep two metres apart from people not in your household, wear face coverings, and wash your hands before and afterwards – all these actions reduce the spread of the infection.

Limiting Social Contacts

The more social contacts you have, the more risk there is that that you will be exposed to Covid. It is important that everyone limits the number of people they see; the longer people spend with each other, the greater the chance of infection spreading. Stay outdoors if you are meeting up with other people, remembering the rule of 6 (from 2 households) from 29th March.

Please help us keep St Matthew's a Covid secure school so our children can continue to learn, grow and thrive. Covid is very infectious, so we need to take all of the measures to prevent infection. We all have to play our part and we are asking for your support so that we can together stop the spread of Covid.

Yours faithfully,



Mr P Langridge
Head teacher



Eleanor Roaf,
Director of Public Health,
Trafford Council