



Ely St Mary's C of E Junior School

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Tuesday 4th January 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

Welcome back!

Happy New Year to you all! I hope you have all had a happy and healthy break and the children are looking forward to returning to school tomorrow.

The school gates will open at the usual time of 8:40am tomorrow and Y6 are able to attend in their PE kits as PE lessons will resume on the children's usual days (house coloured tops, black/dark bottoms, extra jumper, trainers).

Classrooms will continue to be frequently ventilated and therefore pupils are welcome to bring into school an additional jumper or layer of clothing to wear if cold – we ask that this is in addition to their school jumpers, not instead of a school jumper please.

Hot Meals

As I'm sure everyone will be aware, the challenges of the pandemic remain and unfortunately will impact our school hot meal provision for the first week back due to staff isolation. **We therefore ask families to provide their children with a packed lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday this week, please.**

Our kitchen will provide school packed lunches for all Free School Meal pupils and any children who are unable to arrange a packed lunch at short notice (where this applies for students who are not eligible for free school meals, please ensure Parent Pay accounts are in credit). School packed lunches will consist of a roll, crisps, salad bar and dessert and drink.

If you require a school packed lunch this week, including pupils eligible for free school meals, please book via the link below. [School Packed Lunch Order Form](#)

We envisage returning to hot meals no later than Tuesday 11th January but will confirm this as soon as possible. We thank you for your understanding.

Further Covid 19 Updates

- **Symptoms**

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

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

For most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. However, if you have any of the symptoms above, even if your symptoms are mild, please stay at home and arrange to have a test. There are several other symptoms linked with COVID-19 and some are similar to the common cold. These other symptoms may have another cause however we encourage you to arrange a PCR test.

- **Changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances. Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results

are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. If both these test results are negative, **and you do not have a high temperature**, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and **return to your education setting from day 8**. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

- **Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19**

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, **should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time**. We will notify parents where classes/ pupils are identified as a close contact via an email letter and advice jointly from school and Cambridgeshire.

- **Staffing**

Finally, the DFE recognise that the current high rates of COVID-19 may cause difficulties with the availability of staff. We share their priority to keep education settings open and children and young people continuing face-to-face education. However, where workforce issues arise, children may naturally experience some short-term changes within the teaching or teaching assistant teams or, at present, our kitchen team and the request for packed lunches this week. We appreciate your understanding as we respond to these challenges as they arise.

Snow

In the rare event that inclement weather affects the school's ability to open in the final few winter months, please view the school's 'snow plan' for information about how we will proceed.

https://www.elystmarys.org.uk/web/snow_plan/392978

Clubs

We are pleased to share that current guidance at the time of writing enables clubs to continue. Please therefore check your emails in due course for the 'Spring Term Clubs' letter and booking information.

Should we identify an increasing number of Covid cases in a particular class or year group at any time, we may need to implement 'ring fencing' measures on a week-by-week basis.

Emails & Communications

We appreciate recent months have seen more email traffic than any other year, with guidance updating and changing on a frequent basis nationally and locally. We therefore thank you for taking the time to regularly check and read school mail – the most effective way to quickly share information. Should you feel you are **not** receiving school emails, please do give the office a call and we can check we have your correct email address on our system as the primary contact.

We look forward to seeing the children tomorrow and welcoming them back for a positive spring term ahead.

With best wishes,

Miss Clarke & the Ely St Mary's staff team.