

# Carwarden House Community School

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Headteacher: Tim Stokes

small community **thinking big**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents / Carers,

I am delighted to report that the start of the new academic year and return of all students after a long period out of school has gone extremely well. All the control measure outlined in my letter to you on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August are being fully implemented and students have responded extremely well to the new ways of working & learning together. I am confident we remain 'COVID-19 secure'. We are particularly delighted with how well the majority of new students have settled at Carwarden and we are really enjoying getting to know them. I am optimistic that any remaining transport issues will be resolved very soon.

The arrival & departure arrangements are working well – thank-you so much for your patience & cooperation as we've introduced new procedures to keep everyone safe.

We are carefully monitoring how the new curriculum arrangements are working to ensure your child can 'catch-up' and make really good progress in all their subjects. We will be making a few 'tweaks' in the coming weeks to make sure we are providing the very best teaching & learning experience for every student.

I want to thank staff for everything they are doing to make all the new arrangements work so well. All their hard work, detailed planning, collaboration together and sensitivity in responding to individual student needs is truly inspirational. I am so proud of how well the Carwarden Team has responded to highly challenging circumstances!

I'm sure I'm not alone in struggling to always fully understand the latest COVID-19 guidance. There is so much, it constantly changing and, at times, it is a bit confusing to say the least!

I thought it might be helpful if I pulled together a summary of the guidance the school is following in relation to protecting the community from anyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms or needs to self-isolate. Please see this below. I hope this helps make things a little clearer.

Please be assured we are doing everything possible to keep your child safe. We are responding immediately if anyone becomes symptomatic or has been asked to self-isolate and erring on the 'side of caution' if we think any individual poses a potential infection risk to others. Obviously, this is the time of year when normal colds & coughs become much more common but we are taking medical advice if we are unsure whether to isolate & send students home or not. Better safe than sorry!

As I have previously promised, **we will inform you if any member of our community receives a positive COVID-19 test.** We will tell you if the individual is in your child's bubble or not and pass on to you all information & guidance we receive from Public Health England, specifically if your child is advised to isolate at home. **You should not keep your child at home unless you are advised to by the school, your GP or NHS 111.**

We are very keen to avoid any misinformation or unnecessary 'scare mongering' based on rumour or partial information – rest assured, we will contact you directly if there is anything you ought to know.

Please continue to keep in contact with the school if you have any questions or concerns – communication between home & school is more important than ever.

Kind regards,

Tim

Tim Stokes  
Headteacher

## COVID-19: School action to minimise risk

**School action to minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.**

**We are ensuring that pupils, students, staff and other adults do not come into the setting if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or have tested positive in the last 10 days, and ensuring anyone developing those symptoms during the day is sent home** (they are immediately isolated once symptoms become apparent to await collection).

**If anyone in the setting becomes unwell with a new and persistent cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they will be sent home** and advised to follow [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#), which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 10 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19).

If they have tested positive whilst not experiencing symptoms but develop symptoms during the isolation period, they should restart the 10 day isolation period from the day they develop symptoms.

**Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.**

**Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any students who have been in close contact with them, do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves** (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

### **Isolating at home: main messages**

**If you have symptoms of COVID-19 however mild, self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started.** You should arrange to have a test to see if you have COVID-19 – go to [testing](#) to arrange. Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

**If you are not experiencing symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, self-isolate for at least 10 days**, starting from the day the test was taken. If you develop symptoms during this isolation period, restart your 10-day isolation from the day you developed symptoms.

After 10 days, if you still have a temperature you should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice. You do not need to self-isolate after 10 days if you only have a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste, as these symptoms can last for several weeks after the infection has gone.

**If you live with others, all other household members need to stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.** The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the household became ill or if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken. If anyone else in the household starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for at least 10 days from when their symptoms appear, regardless of what day they are on in their original 14-day isolation period. The ending isolation section below has more information.

Following a positive test result, you will receive a request by text, email or phone to log into the NHS Test and Trace service website and provide information about recent close contacts.

1. If someone tests negative, if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating. They could still have another virus, such as a cold or flu – in which case it is still best to avoid contact with other people until they are better - other members of their household can stop self-isolating.
2. If someone tests positive, they should follow the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#) and must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to the setting only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell or taste. This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal. Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.

<b>School action to manage confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst the school community</b>
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**We will take swift action when we become aware that someone who has attended school has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19).** We will contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact us directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the setting– as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.

The health protection team will work with settings in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take.

Based on the advice from the health protection team, we will send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious.

Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with a case for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin to skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

**The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home.** We are keeping a record of pupils and staff in each bubble, and any close contact that takes place between students and other staff (e.g. therapists).

A template letter will be provided to us, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed.

**We have confirmed that we will share information of all positive COVID-19 tests for those attending school with parents and staff.**

**Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the student or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms.** If someone in a bubble (or larger group) that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#). They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period - this is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days
- if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period) - their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms,

following [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)

In the vast majority of cases, we anticipate the school and parents will be in agreement that a child should not attend, given the potential risk to others. In the event that a parent or carer insists on their child attending school, we can take the decision to refuse the child if in our reasonable judgement it is necessary to protect other students and staff from possible infection with (COVID-19). Any decision will be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and the current public health advice.

Further guidance is available on [testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

<b>Schools action to contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice</b>
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If we have 2 or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, we may have an outbreak and will continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of students (and their staff) self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole school, a bubble or year group. As we are implementing all recommended control measures, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within our setting will not generally be necessary, and will not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in our school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's bubble, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine published health outbreak control practice.