



16 September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**Coronavirus update: what to do if your child becomes unwell**

We have received a number of calls from parents asking for guidance where children are displaying possible symptoms.

**The symptoms of coronavirus are set out below:**

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

**NB: Parents and carers must isolate their child if they believe their child has one of these symptoms**

Whilst I recognise there will be some frustrations, isolation must continue until such time as the children have had a test *even if it takes longer than it should to get that test*. This is to ensure we protect everyone and help children and adults to stay safe at school. We must prevent any wider potential spread. Absence related to a child who is symptomatic but awaiting a test will usually be authorised ‘pending test’; there is no further action that Oakdale Junior School can take at that stage, in line with government guidance, even if getting a test takes longer. I am very conscious that the national testing process is not operating at the level we would expect and there are challenges getting tests locally; we share your hope that we will see swift improvements with this.

The government has provided schools with a limited supply of home test kits. The test kits can only be offered to individuals in exceptional circumstances.

I am also very aware that as parents and carers, you want to do the best for your children and naturally want them in school, but we must at this time continue to follow the guidance set out.

It is very important that people with symptoms of or a positive COVID-19 test and their household members stay at home. Staying at home will help prevent the spread of the virus to family, friends, the wider community, and particularly those who are clinically extremely vulnerable.

I offer my thanks for the part you are all having to play to protect our local school community.

Yours sincerely

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