

Dear Parents

Firstly, may I wish you all a very Happy New Year and hope you have all managed to have a wonderful Christmas with your families. As anticipated, the Omicron variant has taken hold quite significantly with many of us having some disruption to our celebrations over the past few weeks.

With no clear guidance beyond that provided before Christmas by the Department for Education, it is now for us to act in the best interest of keeping our staff and your children safe and try to limit absence as much as possible by reducing the probability of an Omicron outbreak in our school. We are aware some measures we may put in to place rely on your goodwill and are not statutory, however we hope that together we can reduce the risk of children having to learn online at home. This circumstance will be unavoidable if numbers of cases in each class rise or staff absence restricts our ability to provide safe and high quality provision.

**In school we will:**

* Update our outbreak management plan and risk assessment. (Both are now available on our covid area which can be found here [COVID-19 Information – Oxhey First School | Biddulph | Staffordshire](http://oxhey.staffs.sch.uk/covid-19-information/)
* Move back into bubble /class based cohorts. This means children will play, learn and eat together in a consistent group. Mixing with other bubbles will be reduced significantly
* Assemblies will now be class based
* Provide clubs, to our children but these will be organised in a manner that reduces bubbles mixing
* Restrict cloakroom access to avoid cohort mixing.
* Monitor ventilation via the use of carbon dioxide monitors in each classroom
* Promote the catch it, bin it, kill it personal hygiene approach
* Provide hand sanitiser in all classrooms
* Strongly recommend that our staff are both fully vaccinated including a booster.
* Ensure staff LFT at least twice weekly and complete temperature checks on arrival and wear masks in communal areas
* Provide staffroom facilities on a staggered basis to reduce staff mixing
* Continue to provide PE, music and swimming sessions
* Monitor closely the visitors we allow into our school, ensuring that where they are unavoidable, they are testing regularly, provide close contact details and have their temperature checked on arrival.
* Create separate dining areas within the hall and classroom to reduce increased mixing.
* Zone off playground areas, to reduce close contact outside of bubbles.

**We kindly request in an attempt to reduce the probability of an Omicron Outbreak in our school that:**

* Only 1 adult bring their child(ren) to school and please ensure you drop off and leave the school site promptly. Any adult entering the school site, must unless exempt, wear a face mask. We request you do not stop to chat to other parents as we need to reduce the crowding on the playground.
* Drop off will be extended from 8:40am-9am
* Parents remain vigilant regarding symptomatic and asymptomatic children/ family members and update us immediately if any positive cases are confirmed in your household
* Parents prepare their computer to be able to access Teams in the event that we have to educate offsite. Make sure you test this out and that your child’s log in and password work. (These can be found in their planners.)
* Parents alert us immediately if your child may require a laptop if they were to be asked to learn online.

**Communication**

We value contact from you and know that communication is vital for us all to feel your children are happy, safe and well. However we need to reduce face to face contact between you and our staff. Please continue to use the school text service, phone, and email to communicate with us and we assure you that if we have any concerns regarding your child we will contact you immediately. Please avoid using the school office in person. Meetings with staff can be arranged by appointment if necessary.

**Before and After School Care**

We will be offering a before and after school care facility in the school hall where greater social distancing can be encouraged and the mixing of year groups limited as much as possible. We can only have children who are BOOKED in ADVANCE so please call or email the office if you wish to book your child in via the Tiger Club email address.

 **PPE and Cleaning Arrangements**

The school has provided the staff with access to aprons, gloves, masks and face shields. Staff will be asked to wear all PPE when dealing with a child who has had an accident, is poorly or is showing any symptoms of COVID19. Beyond this staff can wear whatever PPE they feel safe and comfortable in. Additional cleaning during the school day is in place both by staff in the classrooms and by our cleaning teams to ensure frequently used areas and touch points are regularly wiped down.

If you have any additional questions please contact us via the school office- 01782 513000 or office@oxhey.staffs.sch.uk

Best wishes,

Mrs L Jukes (Headteacher)