



Tuesday 14th September 2021

Dear Parents & Carers (and students),

I thought it would be useful to send you further clarification on when you are required to report anything Covid-19 related to the school, how to report it and what the expectations are around attendance, depending on your situation. I felt it would be easier to format this in a question and answer style so that you can easily refer back to it, if or when you find yourself in that particular situation. However, as always, if in doubt about what you should do, please do not hesitate to contact the main office for further advice. Thank you to parents and carers who have reported Covid-19 related absences to us already this term.

At the time of writing, the government expectation until the end of September 2021, is for all students and staff to continue carrying out a lateral flow test every Sunday and Wednesday and report all results [via the school website by 8pm on those 2 evenings](#) Please can I encourage you to continue to do this which will contribute significantly to keeping our school community as safe as possible. These tests should be carried out even if you feel well and have no symptoms.

If government guidance is updated and we are asked to continue with testing beyond September 2021, then we will inform you all immediately and distribute further test kits as required to students.

Could it be Covid-19?

There are many similarities between Covid-19, seasonal flu and the common cold and we appreciate that making the decision as a parent/carer is increasingly difficult in these uncertain times. As per existing government guidance, we are encouraging everyone to attend school if you are confident that it is no more than a standard cold, (that you would not normally keep your child off for).

Both Covid-19 and influenza (flu) can have varying degrees of signs and symptoms, ranging from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe symptoms. Unless we receive any change to the current government guidance, we are still only associating Covid-19 symptoms as being:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

Your child may come to school and will not be sent home with one or more of the following:

- A blocked or runny nose
- A sore throat
- A headache

What to do if my child has Covid-19 symptoms?

Please do not send your child to school. Report the student absence as 'Covid 19 symptoms' to Lisa Oxe, our School Attendance Officer, by contacting 01937 833466 or email attendance@tgs.starmat.uk

If you have not done so already, we will ask you to book in for a PCR test through the government website which [can be found here](#). You may want to carry out an LFT as well. However, as a school, we can only accept the result of a PCR test if your child has symptoms. Your child must self isolate until the result comes back. Remote learning will be provided via their Google Classroom, until they are able to return to school.

What to do if my child has tested positive for Covid-19?

Please do not send your child to school. They must self isolate for 10 days from the date of positive test, or onset of symptoms.

You must first inform the school via the link on the website which [can be found here](#). Please do not report this to school via email, telephone call or in person. The link on the school website, feeds straight into our central record system. This can be done at any time or day and we ask that you submit this information, via the link on the website, as soon as you possibly can.

In addition, we ask that you contact Lisa Oxe, School Attendance Officer, during office hours, to discuss next steps for your child such as establishing a return date to school. We will also ask you to send a copy of the confirmatory positive result to us.

Once a return date is established, we will alter our school register accordingly for your child so that it is accurate and up to date. Please may I remind you that as per current guidance, household members who are fully vaccinated or who are under 18 years and 6 months will not need to self isolate, but should get a PCR test. Therefore, siblings should continue to come to school (even while waiting for their PCR result) unless they too are symptomatic.

Household members who do not fit the above criteria must isolate for 10 days from the date of test or onset of symptoms

What do I do if my child is self isolating due to symptoms but has now tested negative?

Please contact the school office and inform us immediately. You will be asked to send the confirmatory negative result to us. A negative result means your child can return to school straight away (on the same day if viable) if they are well enough to do so.

Do I send my child into school if someone in the house has symptoms or has tested positive for Covid-19?

Yes, if your child is under the age of 18 years and 6 months, they are still expected to attend school. If they then develop symptoms, they should self isolate and seek a PCR test.

What do I do if I have been contacted by NHS track and trace and informed that my child has been a close contact?

NHS Track and Trace will only ask close contacts to self isolate if they are over the age of 18 and 6 months and not vaccinated. There is no requirement for children or young people under the age of 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccine status, to self isolate, whilst awaiting the results of their PCR test, if they have been asked to get one due to being a close contact.

What do I do if my child is ill with symptoms not linked to Covid-19?

Our school procedure is for parents/carers to notify by phone or email attendance@tgs.starmat.uk by 8.30am at the latest to report a student's absence, giving a clear and valid reason. We kindly request that you continue to contact school each day thereafter to ensure we are aware of continued illness and the planned date of return to school.

As a reminder, where possible medical/dental appointments should be arranged outside of the school day. However, we realise this is not always possible and appropriate absence for appointments will be authorised. Please inform the office or email attendance@tgs.starmat.uk of any planned appointments, students will be required to sign in and out at the main school office at an agreed time, in line with safeguarding procedure.

And finally

A reminder that school will close early at 12.25pm on Friday 24th September 2021 prior to the Open Morning on Saturday 25th September 2021. Food will be available at morning break on Friday 24th September.

Kind regards,

Mr R Vernon
Deputy Headteacher
r.vernon@tgs.starmat.uk