Wednesday 9th September.

Dear Parents and Carers,

The Government has updated their guidance for schools again yesterday. Since returning to school I have had several conversations with parents and I know that the office have received calls too asking about whether their children are allowed into school with certain illnesses and symptoms. It is a very difficult situation and we are not medical professionals; we can only make our best judgements based on the current guidance that we have. I expect that as we approach the winter months this is going to become even more challenging as children (and staff) will naturally get bugs and illnesses. I have tried to simplify and summarise the Government’s guidance below. If text is highlighted yellow this is our personal interpretation rather than government guidance.

If you have any doubts or are not sure what to do we suggest you keep your children off and ring us before school starts so that we can make a decision.

Thank you for your support,

Simon Dyson

Principal

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| **Highfields quick reference guide**  |
| My child has a cough | If the cough is **new and persistent**, that means your child has coughed a lot for more than an hour or has had 3 bouts of coughing in a day – **KEEP THEM (and their siblings) OFF** and follow more detailed guidance in this letter. If your child regularly has a slight cough and this has not got any worse or more frequent **and** there are no other symptoms your child **may** be able to attend – please ring and speak to us before you bring your child in.  |
| My child has a temperature | If your child has a temperature over 37.8 degrees **DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD (or their siblings) INTO SCHOOL**. Check their temperature regularly and contact the school before you send your child in. If the temperature remains high for a sustained period of time follow the guidance in this letter.  |
| My child says that they can’t taste or smell anything | KEEP YOUR CHILD (and their siblings) OFF and follow the guidance in this letter |
| My child has a cold, blocked nose, and is sneezingMy child has a sore throat, a headache or feels tired | Your child is allowed to attend school. It is your decision whether they are well enough to attend. |
| My child has sickness or diarrhea | Your child is not to attend for 48 hours after their last bout. Siblings may attend |
| Other illnesses | Use this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases> |
| **IF IN ANY DOUBT PLEASE CALL US BEFORE YOU SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL** |

**Guidance to parents on when and when not to send your child into school**

*(Taken from DfE guidance issued on Monday 7th September 2020)*

**Schools must minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.**

Ensure that pupils, staff and other adults **do not come into the school** if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms **or** have tested positive in at least the last 10 days and ensure anyone developing those symptoms during the school day is sent home.

If anyone in the school becomes unwell with **any** of the following:

* a **new and persistent** cough
* a high temperature (above 37.8)
* has a loss of or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

they **must** be sent home and advised to self-isolate for **at least 10 days** and they should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) **can and should** get a test.

The full list of symptoms is very long and includes things like nausea, tiredness, headaches, nasal congestion and sore throats. You should focus on the key symptoms that are bullet pointed above. Children can come into school with colds, sore throats, headaches etc as long as they don’t have any of the key symptoms.

The key to coughing is ‘new and persistent’. A new, continuous cough means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).

**Main messages:**

If you have [symptoms](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection#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. 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. See the ending isolation section below for more information.

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.

If you have symptoms, try and stay as far away from other members of your household as possible. It is especially important to stay away from anyone who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable with whom you share a household.

## Getting your test result:

You'll get a text or email when your result is ready. Most people get their test results the day after taking the test. Some results might take longer, but you should get them in 72 hours.

There are 3 types of result you can get:

* negative
* positive
* unclear, void, borderline or inconclusive

If you had a test because you had symptoms, you and anyone you live with **must stay at home** ([self-isolate](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/)) until you get your result. **Anyone in your support bubble must also self-isolate until you get your result.**

**Negative test result:**

A negative result means the test did not find coronavirus.

You **do not need to self-isolate and can therefore return to school** if your test is negative, **as long as**:

* everyone you live with who has symptoms tests negative
* everyone in your support bubble who has symptoms tests negative
* you were not told to self-isolate for 14 days by NHS Test and Trace – if you were, see [what to do if you've been told you've been in contact with someone who has coronavirus](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus/)
* you feel well – if you feel unwell, stay at home until you’re feeling better. If you have diarrhoea or you’re being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped

## Positive test result

A positive result means you had coronavirus when the test was done.

If your test is positive, you must self-isolate immediately.

* If you had a test because you had symptoms, keep self-isolating for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started.
* If you had a test but have not had symptoms, self-isolate for 10 days from when you had the test.
* You can return to school after the 10th day **IF** you are no longer feeling poorly or showing symptoms.

Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must self-isolate for 14 days from when you start self-isolating.

## Unclear, void, borderline or inconclusive test result

An unclear, void, borderline or inconclusive result means it's not possible to say if you had coronavirus when the test was done. Get another coronavirus test as soon as possible if this happens.

If you had a test because you had symptoms, you must keep self-isolating and have another test within 5 days of your symptoms starting.

If you’re not able to have another test in time, you must self-isolate for at least 10 days from when your symptoms started. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must self-isolate for 14 days. Read more about [how long to self-isolate](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/how-long-to-self-isolate/).