

# Barrs Court Primary School



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Headteacher: **Daniel Webster**

Dear Parents and Carers

Following on from the updated Department for Education (DfE) Covid guidance received earlier in the week and some clarification from the Local Authority today. There are some important changes regarding testing and isolation periods for children.

The three main symptoms of Covid remain the same:

- A new, persistent cough
- A high temperature
- A loss of taste or smell

The main changes are in the language and removal of the legal requirement to isolate. You will see below that phrases like **must** have been replaced by phrases like **should**. If your child shows any of these symptoms, the DfE **recommend** that you book your child a PCR test, and that they **should** isolate until the result of the test is known. In the absence of a PCR test being available, a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) can be used. If the test is positive, then your child **should** isolate at home for five days. Many people are no longer infectious after five days. Children should return to school once they have had two negative lateral flow tests.

If the above applies to your child, absences will be coded as X (for unable to attend school) while they await the outcome of the PCR test and then I (for illness) for up to 10 days after the PCR test. X codes do not count towards a child's attendance or absence. I codes count as authorised absence. This method of coding is the one recommended by the Local Authority.

These testing and isolation recommendations now place the school (and indeed all schools) in a challenging position. Because the legal requirement to isolate is removed, there is no statutory requirement for children or staff to isolate if they display symptoms or even test positive. However, in the interests of the health and wellbeing of our whole school community, for the next four weeks, **Barrs Court will continue to ask children and staff with symptoms to get tested with a PCR test and isolate until they know the result. If they test positive, the school will recommend an isolation period of a minimum five days.**

Whilst we can encourage and recommend symptomatic children to be tested and isolate with a positive result, we cannot enforce it. We will, however, require parents to collect children who we feel are not well enough for school or who fall ill during the school day with one of the above symptoms.

If a parent or carer tests positive for Covid-19 because the legal requirement to isolate has been removed, you can bring your child(ren) to school. If this is the case, we would ask you to wear a mask and limit your contact with people in school. On 1st April, PCR and lateral flow tests will no longer be freely available, and the LA will issue further guidance.

If you have any questions, please ask. Thank you for your continued support.

Daniel Webster

Headteacher  
Barrs Court Primary