

Aldryngton Primary School

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Headteacher: Mark Wieder

Weekly Update: 14th December

Dear Parent/ Carer,

I would like to start off by celebrating some fantastic news- children in Y2, who have recently completed the nationally delayed phonics check had a pass rate of 93%. This is a school best score in this particular assessment and beats our previous high score of 91% achieved in 2020. For families that have been with us for several years, you may be aware that this was a development area of the school as 70% passed in 2019. It was a real community and team effort to improve outcomes in phonics. The PTA supported the school by providing funds for the new phonics scheme introduced as a result. Staff have actively engaged in the training provided in order to deliver the programme. Children have worked hard and been attentive in lessons and parents have supported by following up at home. Well done to everyone involved and in particular to Miss Nowell, who led on this project.

As you are well aware the current Covid situation is evolving at pace and there is some uncertainty of what may lay ahead nationally from January. I have been attending meetings to keep ahead of recent developments. The school operational guidance issued by the Department for Education has had several updates and I anticipate there may be more to come before the return in the New Year. From the most recent update, I anticipate that lateral flow testing is going to play a significant role in keeping schools open. Therefore, I would like to reiterate to families to stock up and engage in the twice weekly testing. This week we will be attempting to mitigate risk as much as possible with our current staffing capacity. Our risk assessment will be updated in light of the most recent national guidance ahead of the return in January. I have a couple of other important announcements for you this week.

Strong Possibility of Remote Learning on Thursday and Friday this week

As you may be aware our staffing capacity to deliver face to face education has been under constant strain in recent weeks. Over the weekend, we had more staff test positive for Covid. So far this week, we have been able to redeploy tutors and teaching assistants where possible to provide cover for classes. However, our current forecast with known staff absences (without planning for any unplanned absences that may occur on the day) is below those required to operate the school fully on Thursday and Friday currently. I will wait until tomorrow lunchtime before communicating a final decision. However, at this point, I would like to alert you that we are attempting all other options, before a move to remote education as a last resort.

Covid Update

Since my last Covid update on Friday, there has been seven further cases reported to the school. Five in Middle School and two in Upper School.

Covid Close Contact Isolation Changes

From 14th December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result. Daily testing of close contacts applies to all contacts who are:

- fully vaccinated adults - people who have had 2 doses of an approved vaccine
- all children and young people aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccination status
- people who are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons
- people taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine.

Children under 5 years are exempt from self-isolation as a close contact and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts.



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Christmas Pantomime

We have been updating the theatre company in regards to our current number of cases. In light of recent developments both at school and nationally, they have decided to reschedule the pantomime for next Christmas.

Aldryngton Chronicle

Our first photographic edition of our new interactive newsletter will go out to families later this week. It will be published using Microsoft Sway.

Reports

These are also due to go out before the end of term. In light of the current situation, we are aiming to get these out tomorrow.

End of Term Message

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I shall look to welcoming you all back in January.

Yours sincerely

Mark Wieder
Headteacher

