



Bryn Offa Church of England Primary School

Rockwell Lane, Pant, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY10 9QR
admin@brynoffa.shropshire.sch.uk
Tel: 01691 830621

Headteacher: Mr P Thompson

Friday 29th January 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

At the end of last week, we finally received the delivery of the Lateral Flow Tests we had been waiting for. These tests work in a slightly different way to the PCR tests, but they give the result in thirty minutes so provide a very quick result. This is a major step forward in improving the safety in school.

On Friday I gave staff their tests to be done twice a week (Sunday and Wednesday) and was expecting the first Sunday to be a bit of a dry run to test all the reporting systems. When I received notification early Sunday afternoon that one of the staff had tested positive, I was a little shocked but also relieved that this had been picked up on a Sunday and the staff member could begin their isolation. The value of the test proved in the very first use!

Within an hour of being informed of the positive result, the school staff and parents of the children who were in school were emailed and Bubble 2 went down for ten days. We then began a period of increased infection control at school (hopefully done so the children would have barely noticed) and waited to see if there would be any further cases. So far we have had no further positive cases from staff or children. The long incubation period of the virus means we can't really relax until the end of the isolation period and Bubble 2 are back with us on Tuesday 2nd February.

In some ways it is quite frustrating not knowing where the infection came from, which is why we ask for increased vigilance from the families that have children currently in school. If we get multiple cases in school, Public Health regard that as spread within the establishment (an outbreak) and they could close the whole school for ten days or longer. This is what we are working so hard to avoid. This is really not the time to be pushing the boundaries or bending the rules, and all parents must remember the seriousness of this virus.

The list of symptoms in children who have a covid infection is long and varies depending on which list you look at, so my advice is clear. If in doubt, keep them out! This is not the time to be sending children to school if they are not well. This is not the time to think, they'll be fine and if not I can come and get them. This is the time to keep them at home, and protect the integrity of the bubbles.

We have now managed to prevent infection between bubbles once in the Autumn Term and once in this term. We can only do this with the continued support of these families with children currently in school.

Parents whose children are accessing the remote education from home will have listened with interest to the government announcement on the earliest date schools could open fully to all the children. School staff listened just as intently as we all want the same thing, to be fully open with all the children back. As always, I have no inside information and I am never given anything before it becomes public. I generally hear about things on the news and in the press briefings, before receiving an email from the DFE the next day confirming what was said.

We know that it is hard for those at home, but the finish line is in sight. Stay strong and stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Thompson