



Unit 20,
St Austell Business Park,
St Austell,
Cornwall, PL25 4FD

7th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this finds you well and that you've had a lovely Christmas break.

I want to provide you with information regarding our arrangements, planning and response to COVID-19 for the start of this new spring term. You will have seen in the press that infection rates are still high across the country and this is expected to increase further over the next few weeks.

Our Aspire Health and Safety team have been busy this week consulting with, and taking the most up-to-date advice from, Public Health, the Department for Education and the Cornwall Local Authority teams. All individual school risk assessments are in place and a COVID Outbreak Management Plan is ready to go, should we require it.

Our planning has been based on balancing the need for the children to have an enjoyable start to the new year with an imperative to reduce any further disruption to their education and to keep the children, families and our staff as safe as we can.

Bubbles

Children will no longer be grouped in 'bubbles'. They will be grouped in their normal classes as they were when we returned in September 2021.

We will resume some assemblies later this term.

If an individual school has an outbreak of confirmed COVID-19 infections, we may consider temporary re-introduction of bubbles, if advised to do so by the South West Health Protection Team.

Break times and lunch times

Children will be able to play freely and with their friends whilst outside. There will be no designated zones for bubbles and children will be able to mix with other classes.

During lunch the dining halls/rooms will run as normal. Windows and doors will be opened to ensure good ventilation. All children will wash their hands/use sanitiser before entering the dining hall.



Carbon Dioxide monitors

The government has provided monitors to schools to enable us to take readings in populated indoor spaces, thereby providing that reassurance existing ventilation measures are working and helping balance the need for good ventilation with keeping classrooms warm.

Cleaning

Our cleaning contractors continue to carry out high level cleaning regimes for the whole term. Additional cleaning during the day will take place for highly used areas and resources.

Contact tracing

Schools are not expected or able to undertake contact tracing and do not ask families to keep their children home to isolate nor ask any member of staff to isolate unless they have COVID-19 symptoms. This process is undertaken completely by NHS Test and Trace.

However, so our Health & Safety team can continue to monitor COVID-19 rates across the Trust, a positive PCR result within your household should still be reported ASAP to your child(ren)'s school via telephone or email (only during term time/school opening hours).

Daily testing of close contacts for COVID-19

Since Wednesday 15th December, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 to 18 years and 6 months identified by NHS Test & Trace as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, are strongly advised to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result.

If the PCR test is negative, they no longer need to self-isolate but should continue to carry out the remainder of the daily tests, and only need to isolate if it is positive.

Changes to self-isolation period for positive COVID-19

Since Wednesday 22nd December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.



Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under five, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and the person does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to school from day 8.

DO NOT send your child(ren) into school if:

- they are showing one or more coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms
- they have had a positive test result

Curriculum and Wellbeing

Our exciting curriculum plans and all subjects will be taught as normal. We understand there will be gaps in learning and teachers we will continue to plan for individual children, as has always been the case.

Pastoral care and mental health and wellbeing of children remains at the top of our agenda and our staff are skilled in recognising, supporting and helping children with social, emotional and physical wellbeing needs. There may also be a reduction in confidence and resilience levels as well as social anxieties for some children. Please ensure you talk to your child's teacher about any specific concerns you have regarding your child/children.

Drop off/pick up procedures

These will remain the same, with children arriving from 8:30am, ready for the start of school at 8:40am. End of school day will be at 2:50-3:00pm. We ask that children do arrive on time, as I'm sure we'd all rather staff are in class supporting children.

Education and support for pupils at home

Should your child/children need to isolate and stay at home but remain well, we will be providing remote education.

The school will continue to provide food vouchers for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals while they are not attending school because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines.



Face Coverings

Primary age children are not required to wear a face covering at any time. Staff, visitors and parents are required to wear a face covering if entering the school building and this should be kept on in all communal areas.

Staffing

Thank you all again for your endless patience and understanding over the last two years. We do expect some continued disruption this term with staff shortages due to sickness and/or need to isolate (as all workplaces in the UK are currently experiencing). However, our fabulous staff will always 'go the extra mile' to ensure that children are cared for by familiar adults whenever possible. We ask for your continued support should we need to cover your child's class short term with unfamiliar (but qualified and experienced) adults.

Uniform

All children are expected to attend school in full school uniform but, with the added need for ventilation throughout the school, additional layers are highly recommended to keep them warm on these chilly winter days.

PE kit please needs to be in school every day so PE days can be changed when needed according to the weather, however, please note we will continue to get outside and ask that children continue to have warm clothing / tracksuit bottoms as part of PE kit also.

Wraparound and Clubs

These will continue as normal, with Kids Club open from 7:45- 8:30am and 3:00 – 5:30pm.

Please be aware however that whilst case rates remain high, it is possible that staff shortages may cause some further disruption to clubs and after/before school activities.

Your child(ren) should continue to attend school as normal, provided they are symptom-free and well.

For further guidance, and updates, please visit the Aspire COVID-19 information page at <https://www.aspireacademytrust.org/coronavirus>

Thank you for your continued understanding and support.

Yours faithfully

V Bragg

Mrs V Bragg
Aspire CEO