



Where Children Come First

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Hello there and a Happy New Year to you all.

Firstly, I hope that you have managed to have a restful and enjoyable Christmas break and are geared up for the year ahead.

I would like to welcome Mr Dominic Wilson to the teaching team. He will be leading Adderbury. We look forward to working with you.

Term starts tomorrow-WAC at 0730 and gates for all other children open at 0830 and close at 0840.

I hope that all the children are in attendance tomorrow so that we can start the new year on a collectively positive note. We have a lot to get done – particularly after the disrupted end to Term 2 – fingers optimistically crossed; we will slip the Omicron net.

You know numbers are high and that Omicron is easily transmissible. The future remains tricky and certainly forecast to be blighted by Covid.



Data last updated on Sunday 2nd January 2022

The DfE sent through guidance, and we had a letter from the Secretary of State for Education yesterday.

I am nervous that the new term could trigger a huge spike in cases of the Omicron variant at school and throughout the community with the shortage of testing covid testing kits in time for the return to schools and workplaces following the Christmas holidays being particularly



challenging.

There are mounting concerns among scientists and in the medical profession that a further rapid rise in infections is possible.

The main message is that schools will not close. We have been asked to start preparing for staff shortages by using support staff to fill in gaps, combining classes or using hybrid learning, with some classes taught remotely and some face-to-face. As per the DfE email, we have been advised to deal with staff shortages by combining classes into larger groups. The letter said: "You may wish to use existing teaching, temporary and support staff more flexibly where required to ensure your setting remains open, while ensuring that you continue to have appropriate support in place for pupils with [special education needs and disabilities]. "As pupils do not need to be kept in consistent groups, you may wish to consider combining classes."

My main priority and challenge will be to keep my staff ok and in school. Until I am satisfied and know more, children will be kept in their phases as much as possible. Assemblies will be in phases or whole school assemblies on Teams for the foreseeable future.

Ofsted are resuming the inspection of primary schools this coming week unless heads can prove lack of staff - we are due an inspection so are expecting a call this term. We have had four staff cases over Christmas, with two still positive and in isolation. Cases in families that have been reported to me have been very low.

The routines for the running of school have not changed. Please wear masks on site, keep 2m apart and if you need to communicate with the school office, phone or email. Please contact us to inform us if you are going for a PCR during school time and finally, do not enter the school building.

I know that LFD test kits are in short supply - please LFD test children before their return to school and during the school week. Staff will test daily, even if they have had covid recently. One case in staff has reoccurred after 3 weeks - so better to be safe than sorry. Any signs of Omicron symptoms, please test your child. Keep school informed of any positives or symptoms. If we see a sniff of a symptom, we will ask you to PCR your child. Please isolate until your results are in – if the result is positive, you must isolate. [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection) ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

Ventilation and hygiene are paramount going forward. Staff will wear masks. Without doubt, we will have many cases again. The fact that children [in England] who are household members of a case are mandated to come into school, and children sitting next to a case in a classroom are not even considered close contacts, suggests that policies are geared towards maximising transmission rather than protecting children and their families.

As a community, I am sure that we will be vigilant and do everything in our power to keep going effectively. You were all amazing last term.

I am attending the Oxfordshire Head's briefing tomorrow morning and will know more of the local picture then – I will update you as and when I need to.

I am delighted to tell you that a new caretaker - Mr Shepherd- has been appointed and will start on 10th January. He will be out and about a lot, so please give him a wave.

I think that is enough for now. It's about to get very cold, so do not forget to send in coats



and hats as well as outdoor shoes and layers for outdoor PE.

If we get a heavy snowfall in the coming weeks and cannot open school for safety reasons (I pray this will not be the case), we will contact you asap via ParentHub.

**Last thing: Reading, phonics and times tables need a lot of work throughout the school – daily at-home practise is needed, please support your child as much as possible. Thank you.**

See you in the morning! Enjoy your day all.

Take care.

Ms B x

