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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you are aware that the Government's "Living with Covid Plan" effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 is now the new way we are responding to Covid nationally. At Birch Wood, we have considered the advice for schools and academies and feel now is the right time to reduce some of our measures. We have balanced this carefully against the disruption caused to our students by Covid and the risks related to becoming ill.

Our plan is to follow the updated guidance that:

- children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to school when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend
- children and young people under the age of 18 with a positive COVID-19 test result should try to **stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days, which is when they are most infectious.**

Regular asymptomatic testing is no longer recommended in any education setting, (including in SEND) and therefore, we will no longer be able to order test kits and will stop in-school Lateral Flow Testing after the Easter Holidays. We will be sending home a last box of LFD Tests with the usual students this week. We will aim to support any families who have concerns that their child may have Covid and want to test them, so please get in touch when and if this is the case, as we may be able to support via any surplus kits we have left in school.

We will continue to communicate between home and school where your child is in close contact with confirmed cases. Facemasks will also become optional for staff, although we will aim to provide them free for as long as we have supplies.

The following safety measures will continue be in place in school:

- Cleaning as we go
- Regular hand sanitising
- Keeping a safe space from each other where possible.
- Ventilating rooms
- Stay up to date with vaccination where possible.
- Let us know if you have been in close contact with a confirmed case.

We realise that this has been an incredibly challenging time for everyone and continue to consider the impact of Covid on our whole community. We are looking forward to building back many of the things



Head teacher **Rosalind Hopkins**  
*Where a love of learning grows*



that were halted due to safety measure including enrichment activities and community events. We also want to continue to develop ways to support our staff and students mental health and wellbeing, which has been impacted by the last couple of years. We remain ever cautious that we may have to increase safety measures at different points in the future and have considered this in our planning. At Birch Wood, we continue to be grateful for the amazing support we have had from our parents and carers and want to thank you for working in partnership with us. If you do have any concerns as we take these next steps towards 'living with Covid' please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Rosalind Hopkins  
Headteacher