



1st April 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Foundation Stage – Thanks again, Happy Easter and the bigger picture

You could have been forgiven for thinking that our text/email to you last night was some sort of an April fool gag! Thank-you for the accepting manner in which it was received and for making the best decision for you and your child today – whether that be to join us for the last day of term or not.

It seems appropriate to share with you the bigger picture around what we all recognise as the 'comings and goings' in relation to COVID tests and the closing and re-opening of provision, which as it happens has focussed upon the Foundation Stage this last few weeks.

To clarify, both closures of provision recently have been due to the results of home-based lateral-flow COVID tests providing false results – a frustrating position for all involved, sadly including you and your family.

Many of our staff team, in accordance with government guidance, are volunteering to take COVID tests at home twice each week. The purpose of these tests is to identify the existence of COVID within people who may not be showing the typical, or indeed any, symptoms (none of our staff are fully vaccinated yet, and many of them have not received their first vaccination jab).

You will appreciate then, that if a positive home test result is seen, immediate action must then be taken to restrict the passing of the virus around school and into homes via children. The actions that we must take in these circumstances are all governed by the government's Department for Education.

As a school and a community, we also of course recognise the importance of taking action in these circumstances. **We cannot and will not risk anybody's health by failing to treat positive test results extremely seriously.** We work hard when faced with these circumstances to share timely, open and honest information with you at every stage, and to put measures in place to best support those not allowed in school.

Sadly, the reliability of these tests is not 100%. This has seen on both recent occasions, follow-up lab-based testing providing negative results allowing us to swiftly re-open provision and welcome children back.

Heading into the Easter break we can feel fortunate that Devon, and Teignbridge in particular, is now seeing low levels of the virus at present. We will always do our part in this by responding to positive tests among our staff where they are seen. Be assured that amongst all the apparent 'comings and goings', your child's safety, and that of you, their closest family, is paramount.

We hope that you are able to enjoy some of the relaxation in rules allowing us to share time with friends and family over the next two weeks, and we look forward to seeing everyone back on Monday 19th April.

Yours sincerely,

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