



Building Inspiring Caring

Return to School - January 2022

I hope you have had a good Christmas break and wish all of the Blackwater IC community a Happy New Year. Students are due to return on Wednesday 5th January following their break. As has been widely reported there are recommendations that have been put forward by the Department of Education (DE) to help stop the recent rise in infections of Covid 19 which are largely the same as those we have had in place since Sept 2021. DE have recommended a continued emphasis on good hand hygiene, ventilation, the use of face-coverings, keeping consistent year groups where possible and Co2 monitors in classrooms.

As well as the mitigations above there is a recommendation that **all students should take a lateral flow test before returning on Wednesday** 5th January. Some students may already be enrolled for twice weekly tests and have some tests at home or they can be collected at local pharmacies. We are due to get a new supply of tests on 5th January and will be providing those students who have signed up for this testing with a new batch of tests. If your child is not currently receiving these tests and you would like them to please contact us by calling the College.

With increased community transmission of Covid 19 over the last month we will obviously be taking all of the measures listed above and would urge you to ensure your child has a face covering to wear in school. We are aware some students have exemptions and are not required to wear a face covering.

We hope that the current situation as regards infections improves quickly but we must make plans for all situations. Staff shortage and sickness is one of these eventualities. Keeping students in school will always be our number one priority and we have taken measures to try and mitigate against staff absence with extra teachers in place until the February half term break. Should there be a stage however when we do not have enough staff to safely cover all classes we may revert to remote learning for a short time for some specific year groups until staffing levels are safe for students to return. This will be done on a year group basis and we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible to parents. I hope we do not have to take these measures but we must be prepared.

If you are unsure of the regulations about isolation or testing please call us before sending your child into school and we will do our best to help as we are aware that regulations change on a frequent basis. The College office will be open 9am - 1pm on Tuesday 4th January and please give us a call if you have any queries.

Stephen Taylor
Principal

