



Diocese of Norwich  
Education and  
Academies Trust

## Hopton Church of England Primary Academy

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Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing concerning the current situation regarding school attendance and the guidance in place regarding the expectation for school-age children to attend school.

Thank you to all of you who are continuing to keep us informed about cases within your family in order that we can share this more widely in school.

Thank you too for continuing to trust us with the education, health and safety of your children. We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received and for the confidence you have shown in us by continuing to send your children to school through all stages of the pandemic.

This letter is to set out clearly the expectations of the Government, the Department for Education and the Local Authority in terms of school attendance in order that you know and understand the processes and procedures we follow in school.

Government guidance and guidance from the Department for Education (Schools COVID-19 operational guidance January 2022) clearly states that:

- *P14 School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.*
- *P13 Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend school and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice*

The Local Authority expects all pupils to be in school unless they are unwell or have a positive test result or have been directed to self-isolate by test and trace.

Local Authority guidance (compliance code for all settings January 2022) issued to schools states:

*'The most recent research and evidence suggests that children with health conditions should no longer be considered Clinically Extremely Vulnerable. Therefore all pupils should attend education settings. A very small number of pupils have been advised to isolate or reduce their social contact for short periods of time by their specialist, due to the nature of their medical condition or treatment rather than because of the pandemic. If this is the case, they should continue to follow the advice of their specialist.'*





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The Governing Body fully supports and endorses this guidance and therefore expects the school to ensure pupils registered at Hopton attend school in line with expectations.

I do completely understand the anxiety felt by some parents about COVID and the possibility of your child picking this up in school. As a parent myself and with vulnerable people within my family, I really do appreciate this. However, I also know, from attending weekly meetings with Head teachers across Norfolk, the Local Authority and Lewis Spurgeon, lead epidemiologist for Norfolk, that the current strain of the virus, is not harmful to the vast majority of people.

If your child is too ill to be in school with any of the usual childhood illnesses or ill with COVID, we would not expect them to be able to complete school work. If they are well enough to be able to work but do have COVID, then we will be sending home learning for them to complete in line with what is happening in their class. This is for the duration of a period of isolation determined by the Government/DfE.

If a child is being kept off school for any other reason, this absence will be unauthorised and no work will be sent home. We would also need to be referring this for a Fixed Penalty Notice in line with guidance given in our Attendance Policy which you can find on our school website.

For clarification of the processes to follow, please see the isolation requirements on the attached PDF.

I can assure you that we follow all the most up to date guidance and hygiene recommendations. We fully implement all the expected mitigations and adapt our operational processes when the need arises. Staff wear face masks around the school building unless with their own class and pupils are reminded to follow all the cleaning processes we have in place. We have also reinstated bubbles in some aspects of school to ensure we are minimising as far as is possible further spread of the virus.

Thank you all for continuing to support us and the children in managing and living with COVID. We really do appreciate all you have done to keep us informed and in ensuring we are able to contain outbreaks as far as is practicable and possible.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our school community safe.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Egleton'.

Kellie Egleton  
Headteacher

