



15.09.20

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you all following yesterday's news of a confirmed case of coronavirus within Year 5 and to respond to some understandable concerns that have been raised by parents. Below are answers to some of the frequently asked questions we have responded to from individuals.

How did the child catch coronavirus?

We don't know. All we know is that there is only one case amongst the year group. However, in line with guidance, once case necessitates closure of a year group bubble.

Is my child safe to come to school?

Yes! Prior to reopening, every school had to complete a detailed risk assessment against the government's guidance document.

Lainesmead has a rigorous and robust risk assessment that was approved by the Local Authority (LA) in July and by the Governors at the end of August before school reopened. Where amendments were made to take account of updated government guidance, the LA and Governors have been notified at each stage. The Risk Assessment is available to view on the school's website or using the following link:

<http://www.lainesmeadprimaryschool.org.uk/downloads/policies/LAINESMEAD%20PRIMARY%20SCHOOL%20AND%20NURSERY%20Risk%20Assessment%20for%20full%20opening.pdf>

The school followed all guidance and, further to meetings held with the LA and Public Health England (PHE) yesterday, PHE are happy with the measures (such as staggered starts/ends, staggered break/lunch, cleaning regime etc) we have in place.

How can you guarantee that my child is safe?

We can guarantee that we are following the government's guidance thoroughly, and as stated above, PHE believe our control measures to be of a good standard.

The school is doing everything it can to mitigate the risk. However, the risk continues to be present. The Lancet report on how coronavirus affects children states that "COVID-19 is generally a mild disease in children, including infants."

Who is going to be held accountable if my child becomes ill?

Due to the robust risk assessment we have in place, following all the government's guidance, we know that we are doing everything we can to mitigate risk. We need the support of the whole school community to ensure that this risk continues to be minimised. Therefore, the school cannot be held accountable, as with any illness that children can, and will pick up.

Why don't the siblings of Year 5 children have to self-isolate also?

The risk factor relating to potential infection is direct contact. Direct contact is defined in the government and Public Health England's guidance as:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

Children and adults within Year 5 will have had direct contact with the child prior to the positive test. However, children elsewhere in the school, even siblings, will not have had this direct contact, due to the

nature of year group bubbles. Therefore, the only necessity for self-isolation is within the year group affected.

All other children, unless they have symptoms or are ill themselves (not related to coronavirus), must attend school.

I have a child in Year 5 and in another year group. How do I get my other child to school when my Year 5 child must self-isolate?

We understand that this will be difficult for families. If possible, please arrange with the parent of a child in the same year group a drop-off and pick up schedule. We completely understand if this isn't something that is possible.

If you need help with arranging a drop-off please do let us know as we are happy to make suitable arrangements. Please email the school office on admin@lainesmeadprimary.co.uk should this be the case.

What happens to the children's learning?

As per the government's guidance, the school has a contingency plan for home learning when an individual or a year group has to self-isolate. The process for an individual is different to that of an entire year group. Individual children who are self-isolating join in with lessons being conducted in school. Emails are sent from the class email address to the parent with links to TEAMS meetings which are the lessons the children join. Work they completed should be emailed back to the teacher. Parents who have already experienced this have been overwhelmingly positive in their response to this method of home learning.

When a whole year group isolates, the process is different. Yesterday, all children in Year 5 were sent home with a poster informing them and parents of the next stage of learning. This poster is available on our school Facebook page. For the first day, children will be asked to complete lessons from the government's specialist Oak Academy, an online 'school' that has been established specifically to support home learning. This day enables the teachers to film lessons for day 2 onwards. Teachers will then use the class email address and distribute the links to all the lessons (reading, English, Maths and Science or Topic) and any resources needed to complete the activities. The children's Power Maths book will be sent home along with a home learning exercise book. Children are expected to complete all of the work set each day. Completed work is either emailed back or placed on OneDrive links (as per the home learning during Term 6).

What happens if my child becomes ill with coronavirus symptoms?

If your child develops a new, continuous cough, has a temperature of 37.8⁰ and/or loses their sense of smell and/or taste, then please keep your child at home. You must book a test by either using the online booking service at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling NHS 119. We are aware that it can be very difficult to book. Please attempt at various points throughout the day as test booking availability are released at different times.

When you have received the result of the test, it is essential that you let the school know the result (even if it is negative). Please email both admin@lainesmeadprimary.co.uk AND covid@lainesmeadprimary.co.uk with your result. Please await a response from either of these email address to confirm that it is okay for your child to return to school.

If you are a parent of a Year 5 child who is self-isolating, we continue to need to know whether your child has symptoms and is being tested. Please do inform the school even though the children are at home.

I do hope that this letter has provided some clarity and reassurance regarding the steps being taken in school. Please feel free to contact us should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs E Painter
Head teacher