



Langley Road,
Newton Hall,
Durham,
DH1 5LP

Headteacher : Mrs. L. Frazer B.A. (Hons.)
Deputy Headteacher (Acting): Mrs A. Cooke B.Ed. (Hons.)

Tel: 0191 3861203

Email: newtonhall@durhamlearning.net

Website: durhamnewtonhall.durham.sch.uk

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Durham County Council have reported that there has been a large increase in the number of children and young people in County Durham testing positive for COVID-19 and the highest case rates are in school age children. This is leading to spread of COVID-19 within families and into older age groups.

We just wanted to reassure you that we are still following measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmissions in school as recommended by Durham County Council's Public Health team. The following measures that we have in place:

- The use of face coverings in communal areas, if required, for adults;
- Grouping of pupils in school by class or year group to reduce mixing;
- Trips to be postponed;
- Any events, such as parents' evenings are done virtually;
- Whole school assemblies postponed until further notice;
- Staggered break and lunchtimes to reduce mixing
- School staff encouraged to continue to participate in asymptomatic LFT testing twice per week
- PCR testing for all adults and pupils if they are a close contact of a positive case in their household*;
- Additional attention has been given to ventilation, cleaning and respiratory and hand hygiene.

Both Newton Hall Infants and Durham Blue Coat request parents dropping off and picking up children socially distance and wear a face covering if possible.

LFD Testing advice

We would recommend you have a supply of LFD testing kits at home in the event you are requested to use them. You can order home testing kits to be delivered to your home here www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests

Or you can collect LFD kits at Community Collect sites across the County. To find your nearest collection point please enter your post code here maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk

If you pick up tests from a pharmacy, you may be asked for a 'collect code' this helps the NHS match your details to the tests. To get a 'collect code' please visit test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/collect-lateral-flow-kits

Please register the result of your home test at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result

What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child does develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known. Book a free PCR test at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test . If positive, your child should isolate for 10 full days after their symptoms appeared.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at 111.nhs.uk/ or by phoning 111.

If your child has a positive test result but does not have symptoms they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 full days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset.

You must always register the result of your home test at www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result

Help, support, and further information.

To help you comply with the requirement to self-isolate, the County Durham Together Community Hub can provide access to essential supplies, financial support and emotional support as well as other services. Please visit www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help or call the Community Hub on 03000 260260 for further details.

There is also support available the coronavirus section via durhamlocate.org.uk

Finally, we would like to thank you for everything you've done to keep your family and community safe, and for your patience in continuing to support our school during this challenging time.

Best wishes

Mrs. L. Frazer

Headteacher

