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Dear Parent/Guardian,

Changes to contact tracing and self-isolation from this September

I hope you and your child have enjoyed the summer break.

As we return to school, there are some new arrangements in place when someone tests positive for COVID-19. These changes have been made possible by the vaccination programme and the significant reduction in numbers being hospitalised and suffering severe illness due to COVID-19 over recent months.

If your child tests positive for COVID-19 using a PCR test, NHS Test, Trace, Protect (TTP) will contact you, using the details provided when the PCR test was ordered. They will ask questions designed to identify recent close contacts of your child, and for contact details- if you know them- of the individual or their parent/guardian. TTP will then get in touch with these close contacts to provide instructions or advice.

Those who are under 18 or fully vaccinated are no longer required to self-isolate if they are identified as close contacts. But they will be contacted to let them know that they've been in close contact with someone who has tested positive. They will also be offered two PCR tests and provided with information and advice on how to minimise the risks of onward spread. If your child is identified as a close contact, they can still attend school unless they develop symptoms or are advised otherwise by TTP. Please continue to let us know if your child tests positive.

If a child tests positive, only a minority of their classmates will be identified as close contacts. But if there is a pattern of cases TTP may ask us to update you on the situation and remind you of key steps, including advising you to keep an eye out for new symptoms your child may develop, and to stay away from vulnerable family and friends in the short-term. I assure you that everything is being done, in line with current guidance, to minimise transmission of the virus and to respond to any positives case reported.

We do expect that there will be cases of COVID-19 across our community over the coming weeks, but this does not mean that COVID-19 is spreading within the school. Please continue to be vigilant for symptoms. If you are in any doubt, order a PCR test for your child at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or by calling 119.

Gareth Morgans, BAdd/BEd; MGw/MSc

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You are welcome to contact me in Welsh or English

Anyone with symptoms - a new continuous cough, fever or high temperature or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste - should remain in self-isolation until the test result is known. You can find the latest information on self-isolation arrangements at www.gov.wales/self-isolation.

Your school will advise you of any further local arrangements and I will keep you informed of any further changes. Please visit our website carmarthenshire.gov.wales/education for updates and follow @CarmsCouncil on Facebook and Twitter.

We recognise how difficult the past 18 months have been and the sacrifices that all families have had to make. Thank you for everything you have done to support your child and our school.

Yours sincerely,
Gareth Morgans

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