



30 November 2021

Dear friends,

VARIANT OF CONCERN

On 29 November, Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education, provided a written statement on the 'Omicron' variant of concern. He states: "The emergence of this new variant is a serious development in the ongoing pandemic. We have already taken swift action on international travel. We are now introducing an additional measure, while we learn more about this new strain. All staff and learners in our secondary schools should now wear face coverings while indoors."

Face coverings

The Welsh Government has changed its guidance regarding the use of face coverings. This is a temporary and precautionary step while we learn more about the Omicron variant of concern.

FACE COVERINGS MUST NOW BE WORN BY STUDENTS IN ALL INDOOR AREAS, INCLUDING CLASSROOMS.

Face coverings will also continue to be worn on school transport.

If you consider that your child is exempt from wearing face coverings, please email headteacher@stteilos.com so that arrangements can be put in place to support their wellbeing in school.

If your child does not have a face covering, they should speak to a member of the wellbeing team.

Lateral flow testing

All children and staff are advised to do a test twice a week. Tests can be collected in school from the wellbeing team whenever needed. Alternatively, you can order online, collect from your pharmacy or a local collection site.

Other precautions

The school continues to operate under a COVID-specific risk assessment. Mitigations include year group zoning, enhanced cleaning, staggered access and egress and increased ventilation. You can support us in minimising disruption by following the advice given in **Appendix 1**.

There remains a lot we don't know about the new variant. With this high level of uncertainty, it is right that we remain cautious while prioritising the continuation of education. This may be another bump in the road but we are not panicking. In the words of American author H Jackson Brown Jr., "Let perseverance be your engine and hope your fuel."

As ever,

Mr I Loynd
Headteacher

APPENDIX 1 COVID-19

My child has COVID symptoms. What should I do?

If your child has a cough, high temperature or loss of, or change in, taste or smell they should isolate immediately. A PCR test will be needed to determine if your child has COVID-19. To order a PCR test, visit www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119. **Be sure to update the school by emailing COVID@stteilos.com.**

My child is ill but I don't think it's COVID. What should I do?

If your child is generally unwell, we strongly encourage that they remain at home to allow the worst of the illness to pass. This will help to keep the rest of the school population healthy and reduce levels of staff absence which may affect continuity in learning. Report general absence by telephoning 02920547180 during school hours and pressing Option 1.

Somebody else in my household has COVID. Can my child come to school?

In law, your child is permitted to continue attending school. However, we would encourage an abundance of caution. Please conduct daily lateral flow device tests (available from the school) for ten days. You should also book a PCR test for your whole household on day 2 and day 8 by visiting www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or calling 119. **Be sure to update the school by emailing COVID@stteilos.com.**

My child has been a close contact of a positive case. What should I do?

In law, your child is permitted to continue attending school. However, we would encourage an abundance of caution. Please conduct daily lateral flow device tests (available from the school) for ten days. You should also book a PCR test for your child on day 2 and day 8 by visiting www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or calling 119. **Be sure to update the school by emailing COVID@stteilos.com.**

How will I know if my child has been in contact with a positive case in school?

If a child tests positive, only a minority of their classmates will be identified as close contacts. NHS Test, Trace and Protect (TTP) will get in touch with all close contacts to provide instructions or advice. Contact tracing is no longer undertaken by schools.

I have a question about COVID-19. Who should I contact?

All COVID-related questions, queries or updates should be directed to our dedicated mailbox COVID@stteilos.com. You can find the latest information on self-isolation arrangements at www.gov.wales/self-isolation.