

4 January 2022

Dear friends,

STRONG SAILS

I trust that you have enjoyed a peaceful Christmas with your family and that Omicron has not knocked at your door. As we prepare to begin the spring term, we face new challenges and unprecedented levels of uncertainty – again. With more than 200,000 coronavirus cases today in the UK, and staff absence at an all-time high, we are in for a turbulent few weeks. However, we have planned carefully for such challenges and I anticipate that disruption can be kept to a minimum. In the words of Zimbabwean-born philosopher Matshona Dhliwayo, “When the sails are strong a ship has no reason to fear turbulence.”

In the following pages, I have set out important information for families. Please take time to read this with your child and to let the detail soak in. I particularly draw your attention to the new arrangements for self-testing. We are asking all pupils to use a Lateral Flow Device test before school every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to help control the spread of the virus. We have an ample supply and our wellbeing team will make tests available to your child for use at home.

It is, perhaps, inevitable that your child will be asked to stay at home on occasion as a consequence of staff absence. Our approach should ensure that such occurrences are rare and last for the minimum length of time possible; ideally, no more than one day in the week. Of course, there is much we still do not know about the impact of Omicron and I will keep you updated with our progress. Importantly, you will need to be prepared for sudden and unexpected school closure. The notice provided may be short.

More than ever, we each now need to play our part in protecting the interests of the whole school community. There are numerous (often competing) demands which must be held in balance and I ask that you trust the school to design its approaches equitably and ethically. We will, as ever, prevail. As Russian writer Mikhail Lermontov asserts, “Many a calm river begins as a turbulent waterfall, yet none hurtles and foams all the way to the sea.”

Should you need to reach out to me, please email headteacher@stteilos.com.

With every blessing,

Mr I Loynd
Headteacher



APPENDIX 1 COVID-19 Control Measures

We can all play our part in keeping our school safe and open:



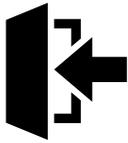
Do not attend school if you are unwell.



Test yourself using a lateral flow device before school every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.



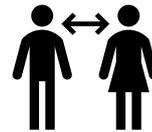
Wear a face covering at all times when indoors (unless you are medically exempt).



Use your designated entrance and exit.



Do not leave your zone unless accompanied by a member of staff.



Give others space, where possible.



Wash your hands regularly and make use of the available hand sanitiser.



Keep classroom windows and doors open, when possible.



Do not obstruct those undertaking enhanced cleaning during the day.



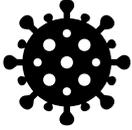
Bring a packed lunch and water to school.



Eat outside in your designated picnic area, when possible.



Be kind to each other and our staff.



APPENDIX 2

COVID-19 School Procedures

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. If there are more than two cases in a class, the school will issue a 'warn and inform' letter.

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.



APPENDIX 3

COVID-19 Alert Level

All of Wales is at Alert Level 2. As a family, keep Wales safe:

- Get both jabs and, when invited, get your booster
- Limit your contacts
- Outdoors is safer than indoors
- Do a lateral flow test before seeing others
- If you have symptoms, self-isolate and book a PCR test
- Wear a face covering

You can read the current guidance by visiting <https://gov.wales/alert-level-2>.

From 31 December:

- If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you can leave self-isolation after 7 full days

From 26 December:

- A maximum of 6 people can meet in public premises



APPENDIX 4

Preparations for Blended Learning

Our collective priority continues to be to minimise disruption to education and ensure, where possible, learners continue to receive in-person learning, as well as protecting school staff and learners. However, as a precautionary measure, it is important that families are prepared for a sudden and unexpected shift to blended learning:

Blended Learning Checklist

- ✓ I know my Hwb username and password
- ✓ I know how to log into Hwb at <https://hwb.gov.wales/>
- ✓ I know how to access my Hwb classes and files
- ✓ I know my school email username and password
- ✓ I know how to log into my school email at <https://mail.stteilos.com/owa/>
- ✓ I have a reliable internet connection and/or sufficient mobile data
- ✓ I have an appropriate device for home learning (laptop or Chromebook)
- ✓ The school has the correct telephone number for my parent/carer

Please speak to one of the **Youth Workers** in your zone if you need any support in preparing for blended learning.