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24<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022 the Prime Minister announced that the temporary introduction of Plan B was to end. Following this announcement, the Department for Education (DfE) wrote to all schools, emphasising that *'COVID-19 continues to be a virus that we learn to live with and the imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education remains.'* The DfE's priority is to *'deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all children and young people'*. This aligns with our school priority; the evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health.

As 'Plan B' comes to an end the key points to note are:

- Education and childcare settings are open, and attendance is mandatory (compulsory) for schools and strongly encouraged at childminders, nurseries and colleges.
- The [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#) has made it clear that the overwhelming majority of children and young people still have no symptoms or very mild illness only.
- Nurseries, schools and colleges no longer trace close contacts - close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace.
- Close contacts of someone with COVID-19, who are under 18 years and 6 months, are advised to test every day for 7 days and continue to attend education unless positive.
- Under 5s who are close contacts of someone with COVID-19 do not need to do daily testing and are advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their household.
- Continuing to take regular rapid tests will help you to identify infections early and reduce transmission.
- Children and young people previously considered Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) should attend school and should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population.
- From 27 January, face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors in communal areas.
- If the number of positive cases substantially increases in a nursery, school, or college, or if a nursery, school, or college is in an enhanced response area, you might be advised that additional measures should be introduced.

You will be aware, from previous communications, that Headlands has experienced an increased number of cases in the past two weeks. In line with the guidance detailed above, and following advice from the Local Authority Infection Control Team, we have introduced additional safety measures for some classes and year groups across school. Whilst it appears that numbers of cases are beginning to reduce, we continue to remain vigilant and adopt a cautious response to the easing of additional measures. At Headlands, staff and visitors will continue to wear face coverings in communal areas. This, along with the additional measures for classes and year groups will be regularly reviewed and communicated to staff, parents and visitors.

It should be noted that all advice and guidance remain subject to change as the situation develops.

Best wishes,

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