

# NEW-BRIDGE INTEGRATED COLLEGE

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Mrs. A. Anderson, Principal

10 September 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

## Updated Covid Guidance – Contact Tracing

Please find attached updated guidance from PHA which was received into school last night (Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March 11.03pm). I urge you to read the attached letter from Professor Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer regarding updated guidance.

I wish to highlight the main changes to contact tracing as outlined by the Education Minister 9.09.21:

“PHA contact tracing service will be identifying and asking the very closest contacts, for example very close friends, to isolate and get a test. Other contacts in school, such as those in the same class or who sit near the case, will not routinely be asked to isolate and book a test. “

See further PHA guidance below regarding new Contact Tracing arrangements:

### **CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN SCHOOL SETTING – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF:-**

*Where a case of confirmed COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has been reported in a person with links to a school setting, all close contacts of the case who need to take specific actions with regard to testing and self-isolation will be **identified, contacted and advised by the Public Health Agency (PHA) Contact Tracing Service** – (this means that schools will no longer be required to respond to every Covid 19 case and identify contacts, instead the PHA contact tracing service will undertake a more targeted approach)*

*If you are contacted by **PHA Contact Tracing Service by text or phone**, please follow the guidance that they provide to you. Information on the latest self-isolation requirements can be found on NI Direct (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-self-isolating>). The advice on what to do if a close contact changed on 16th August 2021.*

### **What to do if your child develops symptoms of 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)*

*Please book a free PCR test, even if an earlier one was negative. Your child should stay at home and self-isolate until you receive the result. Please see Coronavirus (COVID-19): self-isolating | nidirect for guidance on whether other people in your household also need to self-isolate while you are waiting for your child's PCR result.*

*Tests can be arranged at your closest testing site or by requesting a postal kit which will be sent to your home address. You can choose whichever option is more convenient for you. Going for a COVID test is one of the reasons your child can leave home during the self-isolation period, however, they should not use public transport. Please order a postal test if you do not have private transport to a test site.*

### ***How to stop COVID-19 spreading***

*There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:*

- ✓ *Please get vaccinated if you are eligible and haven't already done so*
- ✓ *wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds*
- ✓ *use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available*
- ✓ *wash your hands as soon as you get home*
- ✓ *cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze*
- ✓ *put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards*
- ✓ *Further information*

*For further information, please see the NI Direct website Coronavirus (COVID-19): self-isolating | nidirect the Public Health Agency website <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus> or contact NHS 111. If your child feels unwell and you are worried about their symptoms or about anyone else in the home, please contact your GP. (Public Health Agency 10th September 2021)"*

If your child is off school due to self isolation, please notify school office by email or phone. Please do not hesitate in contacting the school if you have any queries or concerns.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

*A. Anderson*

Mrs A Anderson  
Principal

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