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Dear Ellingham Families

**Please Get PCR Test if you have Covid symptoms**

Welcome back and I hope you all had a lovely break. It was good to see the sun shining.

I have been in liaison with Kingston Public Health in light of the high number of cases in Kingston and want to clarify the process for responding to symptoms and testing in general. It is really important for the school and local community to reduce the number of cases by behaving responsibly and following the guidelines. The impact of not doing so could disrupt the face-to-face education of the school and significantly affects the school.

One of the key actions is that if anyone in your household has Covid symptoms, they must get a **PCR test** and the rest of the household must remain at home. A lateral test is not good enough in this case as it is less sensitive to the virus. Please do not send your children to school if they have symptoms or live with someone with symptoms. The implications of doing so and the children eventually testing positive means self-isolation of classes and teachers, clubs and any small groups. This has a negative impact on the wider community affecting families' ability to work and causing spread to vulnerable people who cannot be vaccinated.

If you are asked to self-isolate, please take it seriously. The dates we provide for self-isolation are based on the last potential exposure to the virus. The new variant spreads very easily and we know of many families without symptoms taking the PCR tests have tested positive.

Please get a PCR test if you have one of the following symptoms:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Thank you to you and your families for your support and understanding at what we know is still a challenging time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Keogh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'L' and 'K'.

Mrs L Keogh  
Headteacher