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31st January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will probably have already noted, on Thursday 27th January the government removed all requirements for students and staff to wear face coverings in schools. This change came at a time when the number of students and staff at Farlingaye who had returned 'positive' test results – and were absent from school as a result – was as high as it had ever been. It is true that we have been fortunate throughout the pandemic in that the number of students and staff absent for COVID-related reasons has always been relatively manageable. However, in recent weeks we have watched with concern as several local schools have been hit with significant spikes in infection rates which have caused huge logistical issues for the schools, and have led to large numbers of students missing face-to-face education. We are keen to do what we can, and to ask our families and students to support us in this, to avoid a similar situation at Farlingaye. Therefore, we would ask you to continue with the following measures:

- Ask your child to test regularly at home
- Take seriously the appearance of symptoms, ensuring your child stays off school while these symptoms are investigated through testing.

We will also be strongly recommending to students that they continue to wear face coverings in crowded indoor areas (e.g. corridors and stairwells) until there is a significant and sustained fall in the number of students who are reporting 'positive' test results. Please note that, if students choose not to do so, they will not be questioned or pressured about this decision. It is a matter of personal choice.

Please also note that we will continue to work within the tiered approach instigated by Suffolk County Council in the autumn term. This means that any significant outbreak within a defined group (tutor group, year group etc) will lead to the school putting additional measures in place – e.g. asking students from within that group to begin daily testing.

Please contact me at Farlingaye if you have any questions about any of the above.

Yours sincerely,

Dr A Sievwright
Headteacher