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Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year! I hope you and your families had an enjoyable Christmas break despite the continuing uncertainty around the Coronavirus pandemic.

It has been wonderful to welcome all year groups back to school today and we are all looking forward to the exciting learning opportunities that 2022 will bring.

As you may be aware, the Department for Education has released updated guidance on how to reduce the risk of transmission in schools. This is particularly important with the current prevalence of the new Omicron variant of the virus.

There are no specific changes within the guidance for primary schools. However, in our school, we are taking some extra measures to limit the spread of the virus:

- We are continuing to keep classrooms well-ventilated. All of our classrooms have windows and external doors and we are now using CO2 monitors in every classroom to track how well ventilated they are.
- Although the DfE guidance no longer recommends grouping children in consistent groups (bubbles), we are reducing contact between different year groups, particularly when indoors.
- Our staff are wearing face coverings in all communal areas, but not when teaching.
- All assemblies and staff meetings will take place online.
- We are continuing with all of the hygiene and cleaning routines we have established.
- Staff are continuing to self-test twice per week using LFD tests.

We are reducing the number of visitors into the school and would therefore encourage you to contact us by phone (01865 340420) or email (admin@abbeywoods.anthemtrust.uk) rather than coming into school in-person.

Unless the guidance changes, Breakfast Club and After School Clubs will continue to operate as usual.

Our biggest problem in the coming weeks could be excessive staff absence. The DfE have encouraged schools to be flexible so that they can stay open. This might include combining classes and asking staff to work in different parts of the school. However, there may be occasions when it is not sensible or safe to do this. At this point, we would need to make a decision about whether all children could be in school. If not, then we may ask classes to learn from home by accessing remote education via Google Classroom. This would be a



last resort, but I do think it's important for you to be prepared for this possibility in the coming weeks.

Whilst the new variant is presenting additional challenges for everyone I strongly believe that we should be positive and optimistic. As a school community we have shown resilience in the face of everything that has been thrown at us throughout the pandemic and we will do so again.

Yours sincerely

Sophie Charter
Headteacher