**Malmesbury Medical Partnership**

**Malmesbury Primary Care Centre**

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Dear Parent

This is a very challenging time we find ourselves in and there is understandably a lot of anxiety in the community around school age children, their risk from COVID-19 and the potential impact of school absence both for that child and for the family as a whole. This email is to try to help you access good, up-to-date information to help us all work together over the next few months.

If you are worried that your child is severely unwell or your problem is an emergency, contact the surgery or NHS 111 in the usual way

1. **Symptoms of coronavirus in children**

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

* a high temperature
* a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot, for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
* a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Please be reassured that if your child has symptoms of the usual winter bugs e.g. runny nose or sore throat but **DOES NOT** have any of the symptoms listed above then they can still go to school if you feel they are able. They do not need a Covid 19 test or a doctor’s note to do so.

The surgery is unable to organise Covid testing as this is all done centrally, and only for the above indications. We are also unable to provide a 'return to school' letter.

1. **What to do if your child has the above symptoms**

If your child has any of the main symptoms of coronavirus:

* Get a test to check if they have coronavirus as soon as possible - please be aware that you cannot under any circumstances get a test through your GP surgery so please do not ring for this purpose alone.
* You can ONLY get a test through 'NHS 111 online' OR by ringing 119 if you do not have access to the internet.
* Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get the test result – only leave your home to have a test. Please only order a test for the person in your household who has symptoms. These tests are NOT for individuals who do not have symptoms.
* Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get the result.
* Access and follow online guidance for Covid-19 at https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

With best wishes

The Doctors

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