

25 June 2021

Parents and Carers
of pupils at all Wiltshire schools

County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Dear Parents and Carers

We wanted to write to you to encourage you to support us in staying safe and keeping transmission of COVID-19 as low as possible.

This month we have seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases and at the time of writing the seven-day case rate is 53.4 per 100,000 in Wiltshire.

This rise has had an impact on our schools and early years settings and in June we have had an increasing number of schools with self-isolation cases and approximately 1,800 pupils have needed to self-isolate this month.

You may be personally aware of schools or early years settings which have had to send children home due to positive cases or your family may have been impacted.

As you are aware the impact on learning when children and staff have to self-isolate can be very disruptive and it makes it difficult to continue smoothly with the curriculum.

Although we are all hoping for more easing of restrictions on 19 July, we must stress that now isn't the time to become complacent and relax behaviour. The figures in Wiltshire and across the country show COVID-19 hasn't gone away there and we all still need to be vigilant.

We know the last thing you will want is to have to self-isolate at the start of the summer break and have holiday plans ruined.

Over the months of the pandemic there has been changes to advice so we thought it would be helpful to set out some key points to remember below and to stay safe:

- All parents are encouraged to take a LFD test twice weekly to check you are not COVID positive. Even if you've had a vaccine it's still important to take the test as this helps break the chain of transmission
- If your child is a secondary school pupil, they should also take a LFD test twice weekly. If the test comes back positive, then it is important to let your school or setting know and self-isolate and they should take a PCR test to confirm.
- If your school asks your child to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone at the school, they must stay at home for the 10 days. This means no meeting up with friends, no attending clubs and no leaving the house apart from going into the garden. You also cannot have visitors in the house.

- Everyone should continue wearing face coverings, washing hands for 20 seconds regularly and maintaining social distancing
- Although face coverings are no longer required in classrooms, it is recommended they are worn by staff and visitors outside of classrooms where social distancing is not possible

We know it's been a long period of restrictions, and this can cause weariness, particularly as the weather improves, but by adhering to these rules we all help to keep transmission down and play our part in keeping everyone safe.

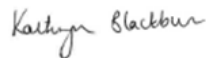
Just to reiterate the simple behaviours we've all displayed over these past 15 months or so are still the most important – so, please keep washing hands regularly or sanitising them, wear a face mask where required, socially distance as much as possible, get your first and second dose of the vaccine when offered, and if you have COVID symptoms, please book a test and self-isolate immediately.

This has been quite a year for all of us. We are almost at the summer holidays so just as in a school sports day race we'd like everyone to keep to the path, stay safe and get over the finishing line of the school year safely.

Kind regards



Helean Hughes
Director of Education and Skills
Wiltshire Council



Kate Blackburn
Director of Public Health
Wiltshire Council