

Children and Families
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Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

We are excited at the prospect of schools re-opening for all pupils from 8th March. If you were one of the many parents who have been home schooling your child since the beginning of January, we would like to thank you for all you have done to work with your school to support your child's learning. We really do understand some of the challenges this situation has brought for you and your children and appreciate the collective effort in the city to help reduce Covid-19 transmission rates.

As part of the return of all pupils, secondary schools are managing the challenging logistics of testing before they return to school and it may well be that your child has a later start date than the 8th March. Again we appreciate your patience if your school is having to stagger the safe return of pupils and assure you that schools are working hard to enable this to take place as soon as possible.

There is cautious optimism in Leeds given the pace of the vaccination rollout but we need to be aware that there are still relatively high infection rates in the city. Additional measures are in place to reduce this risk including regular testing to identify people who are COVID positive and infectious but with no symptoms, greater wearing of face coverings in schools, and more teaching staff being vaccinated as they become eligible.

In addition, we are asking you, to do everything you can to keep rates of transmission down both within our communities and within schools. In particular:

- Please do not send your child to school if he/she or anyone else in your household is showing Covid-19 symptoms of a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss or change in sense of taste or smell;
- Please keep the school informed of any positive cases and test results;
- Please maintain social distancing, and ask your child to do the same, on the journey to school and at pick-up times. Please remember that only one adult should collect their child from school and parents should wear face coverings in the playground if this request has been made as part of the schools control measures;
- Please ensure your child has an adequate supply of face coverings if they attend a secondary school as these will be required to be worn in all situations where it is not possible to maintain 2 metres distance. This will be reviewed during Easter.

You may be aware that school staff will now undertake regular rapid self tests (also known as Lateral Flow Tests) to see if they have Covid-19. This will help to identify cases where staff are showing no symptoms of the virus and may be infecting others without realising it. This is an added measure designed to keep your child safe in school.

There is also a similar scheme available to parents. Twice-weekly rapid lateral flow tests will be given for free to all families and households with primary, secondary school and college aged children and young people, including childcare and support bubbles, to help find more Covid-19 cases and break chains of transmission. The tests can be collected from your local test centre, or if you cannot get to a test centre, ordered online. A map showing your local test sites and a link to enable you to order on line, is available [here](#). Delivery of online tests is expected to take one or two days. They come with instructions on how to take the tests and how to report results back to the NHS.

Within your wider community, please remember to remain vigilant with social distancing, wearing face coverings and handwashing. Please only exercise outdoors with your household or with one person outside of your household (socially distanced) until this rule changes on 8th March. The lower the infection rates in the community, the lower the risk will be as children return to school.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding. Hopefully, by working together, we can reduce transmission and increase the amount of on-site learning our children are able to have.

Yours faithfully



Saleem Tariq
Director of Children and Families



Councillor Jonathan Pryor
Executive Member for Learning,
Skills and Employment