
22nd October 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

It is clear that the country is facing an extraordinary crisis as the Covid pandemic continues to affect all of us. I am also aware that, following the lockdown and limited access to school during the summer, many of you will be anxious that your son/daughter catches up with missed time at school and that any future disruption to their learning needs to be avoided. It is inevitable that schools will at some point have to make a decision to isolate a learning bubble, a year group or, in exceptional cases, even close for a period in line with national guidance.

Our schools, governors, leaders and staff are doing all they can to maintain continuity of learning whilst also ensuring that both staff and pupils in school are safe by minimising the risks posed by Covid. Schools and their leaders cannot do this on their own and they need your help and support. Reinforcing and modelling the rules around 'Hands, Face and Space' with your children outside school will help embed this as a routine not just for school but all the time. It may help reduce the risk of infection entering schools.

I recognise the disappointment and frustration that you may feel if asked to isolate your child at home. I know that some of you will be genuinely worried about the impact this might have on your son/daughter. Some of you may feel angry that so soon after the school return your child finds him/herself at home again. Making a decision to close a learning bubble is not easy for any school leader or governing body, and such a decision is always taken as a last resort following discussion and advice with the Department for Education and Public Health. I do ask for your help in supporting our schools in these decisions however disappointing they may be. The reasons are always to minimise the risk of spreading Covid and to ensure that we can get this under control whilst enabling our schools to operate throughout the coming months.

Please help us and, on behalf of everyone working in our schools, I do ask for your patience, tolerance and understanding at this time.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wagstaff
Director of Education & Skills