



To: All Hampshire education settings

COVID – High Tier in Hampshire

Pending the new local Tiers which will replace the national restrictions across England, from Wednesday 2 December, we are writing to all county education settings - including early years, schools, over 16s and independent schools – to confirm the key guidance for Hampshire, which is placed in **High (Tier 2)**.

We wish to echo the Government's acknowledgment of the enormous effort by early years practitioners, teachers, lecturers, support staff and leaders, who have worked so hard to implement protective measures, remain open and ensure that children have a safe setting in which to learn. Senior clinicians continue to advise that the best place for children and young people is in education, and this would not be possible without your collective dedication to their safety, learning and wellbeing.

It is important to note that Hampshire is in a higher tier than prior to the national lockdown and this reflects the increasing threat posed by the pandemic. As infection rates continue to rise across the county, albeit at a slower rate in recent days, it is imperative that we all act now to stem the spread of infection in the run-up to Christmas and beyond.

The key guidance to note for educational settings under the High Tier is:

- Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities remain open. Registered childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles are permitted;
- Children should attend school or college as normal, unless they are self-isolating.
- When it is necessary for children to isolate, schools have a duty to provide high quality remote education;
- Nurseries, schools and colleges should not change their Christmas holidays or close early this term;
- Outside of school Where the Rule of 6 applies is in force, this applies even if children are in the same bubble at school. (See additional guidance below on where the Rule of 6 applies);

Tier Criteria

The Government has based decisions about Tiers on five key indicators:

- Case detection rates in all age groups
- Case detection rates in the over 60s
- The rate at which cases are rising or falling
- Positivity rate (the number of positive cases detected as a percentage of tests taken); and
- Pressure on the NHS, including current and projected occupancy

The Department for Education has stated that it will update its guidance in the coming days to reflect how settings should operate under the strengthened tier system. The regulations will require the Government to review the allocations every 14 days, with the first review expected to be completed by the end of 16 December.

We must all continue to work together, follow the guidance and rules and do all we can to try to move into Tier 1 (Medium level) before Christmas itself. Please continue to refer to the national guidance for

- [Education and childcare](#)
- [Guidance for schools](#) (which includes amendments to reflect the local restriction tiers. N.B. There are no substantive changes here for schools)
- [After-school and holiday clubs, and other out of school settings](#)

Further information about the Tiers can also be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Thank you for all your support to keep Hampshire safe.



Simon Bryant

Director of Public Health
Hampshire County Council



Steve Crocker OBE

Director of Children's Services
Hampshire County Council