



WARRINGTON

Borough Council

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12 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to thank you for your continued support. We are doing all we can to keep our schools and colleges open whilst following the national guidelines and laws to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

You may also be aware that COVID-19 rates remain very high in Warrington, and it's essential we do all we can, together, to help reduce these rates. Our most recent 7-day validated data shows we have 516 confirmed cases. You can find the latest number of coronavirus cases in Warrington at warrington.gov.uk/coronavirus, which is updated daily to reflect changes in case numbers.

If you or your child displays COVID-19 symptoms, it is essential that you book a test and self-isolate immediately. You can do this by visiting nhs.uk, by searching 'book coronavirus test' online, or by calling 119 if you don't have internet access. Please also inform the school if your child has any symptoms so that the appropriate procedures can be followed.

To recap, the symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste as normal, or things smell or taste different to usual

Schools have put precautions and safety measures in place to reduce risks around COVID-19, and each school will take into consideration their site, staff and students when tailoring these measures to their own school. Along with wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) where needed, schools have been asked to:

- Minimise contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend school.
- Where recommended, use face coverings in schools.
- Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual – maintaining excellent hand hygiene is important.
- Introduce enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces often, using standard products such as detergents and bleach.
- Minimise contact between individuals and maintain social distancing wherever possible.

Each school will have conducted a specific risk assessment for their site in line with government guidance. These risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated.

If there is a confirmed case, schools will work with the Department for Education, Public Health England and the council to conduct a risk assessment to identify who is a close contact of the confirmed case. The outcome of this risk assessment will differ from case-to-case, depending on the length of time the confirmed case was in school, the age of the child and the logistics of the school site.

If your child is asked to isolate, it is essential that they follow the instructions given by the school.

Could parents please be reminded that when students are sent home to self-isolate, they should not be mixing with others outside of the home at any time, until the period of isolation ends.

All students not self-isolating should be attending school unless they have valid reason for absence.

The government have now allowed families to have a childcare support bubble. This is where someone in one household can provide informal (in other words, unpaid and unregistered) childcare to a child aged 13 or under in another household. **This must occur on an exclusive basis, with always the same two households.**

In education settings where pupils and students in year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by staff, visitors and pupils/students when moving around in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain.

Whilst children are isolating, schools will support with remote education. Again, this will differ from school to school. All schools are trying to create a remote learning curriculum that meets the needs of their individual school communities and this will inevitably lead to necessary differences.

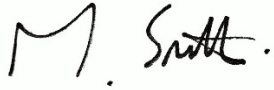
We ask for your ongoing co-operation to help minimise the risk of bringing the virus in to school, particularly by encouraging your family to practise good hand hygiene, observe social distancing advice, use face coverings where necessary and observe the limits on households mixing.

Can we take this opportunity to remind parents and staff that face coverings must be worn when dropping off and picking children up from school, including the approach to school.

We are grateful to all the teachers, school staff and trade unions who have worked with us to help get our young people back to school as safely as possible. Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and support during what has been an extraordinarily challenging period for everyone – it is very much appreciated, as is your support in ensuring children return to school.

More information and a list of Frequently Asked Questions can be found on our website at warrington.gov.uk/coronavirus, but please contact your child's school if you have questions about their specific arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Matt Smith in black ink.

CLr Matt Smith
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Warrington Borough Council

Handwritten signature of Paula Worthington in black ink.

Paula Worthington
Director, Education, Early Help & SEND
Warrington Borough Council