

Letter to Parents

My Ref: JP / TK 079

Your Ref:

Date: 31 August 2021

Dear Parent

We hope you have had a relaxing summer break, and your child is looking forward to another school year.

The rules around Covid-19 in schools have changed, to ensure pupils have as much time learning in school as possible and to minimise the impact of people having to self-isolate.

Here are some of the main changes:

1. Under 18s no longer need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with Covid-19. They will only need to isolate if they are showing symptoms of Covid-19. They should instead take a PCR test to confirm they are negative.
2. Face coverings are no longer recommended in school, but we would strongly recommend that these continue to be worn on dedicated school or college transport.
3. Children will no longer need to be in 'bubbles,' but your school may decide to keep some form of grouping of pupils.
4. Schools will undertake two on-site tests for those in Y7 and above, at the start of the Autumn term. After that, please continue to test your child twice a week at home. Testing helps prevent positive Covid-19 cases being brought into school and will further reduce any disruption.
5. You may have seen in the news about Covid-19 vaccinations for 12-15-year olds. No decisions from government have been made on these yet, but we will look to work with schools and the NHS on any vaccination programme. Staffordshire County Council and Public Health England will keep monitoring schools and offer support if Covid cases increase.

Schools have developed their own arrangements for the start of the Autumn term to support a successful start to the new school year.

We understand that some parents and children will be anxious about returning to school. We would encourage anyone to talk through these measures, and any school-specific ones, with your child's school who will be able to reassure them about the measures being taken in school.

If you have a child aged 16 or 17, please ensure they get their vaccine as soon as possible. Details of walk in centres can be found on the NHS website:
www.nhs.uk.

The past 18 months have been tough for schools and pupils, and we hope to return to some sort of normality over the next school year. We must remember that Covid is still with us, and we must be vigilant and take sensible steps to keep Covid-19 levels low in schools. Please continue to do everything you can to help your local school remain open and keep children learning by following the rules your school will have in place.

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Price
Cabinet Member for Education
(and SEND)



Richard Harling
Director for Health and Care