



**Doncaster
Council**

www.doncaster.gov.uk

Contact: Dr Rupert Suckling
Our ref: Education Letter April 21
Telephone: 01302 737909
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Date: April 8 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Returning to school and your help in reducing Coronavirus

I hope you have had a good Easter break and you child/children are looking forward to returning to their learning. I appreciate it has been a challenging time for education and young people's development during this pandemic. I would also like to thank you for supporting schools in helping to keep pupils/students and staff safe.

We all do need to keep following the guidance – hands, face and space to reduce the virus' transmission in our communities. I appreciate that adapting to a new normal is not always easy and can be frustrating. I have heard that a small minority of parents and children/young people are risking the safety of others by bending or breaking the current COVID-19 rules.

We have received reports of children having sleepovers and playdates at friends' houses, children with symptoms not getting tests and being sent to school, older young people meeting up with friends outside of school and a lack of social distancing. All of this is threatening to cause an increase in cases and stop our roadmap out of lockdown.

I cannot stress these two points enough. One, we are not out of the woods yet and the virus is still very dangerous. And two, school bubbles are only safe in school because of all the other protective measures in place like ventilation, contact tracing, extra cleaning, face coverings, etc. It's highly unlikely that the same level of protection is taken elsewhere, and therefore children and young people should absolutely not be mixing with their school bubble outside of school.

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You may think you're not at risk, but one in three people don't have any symptoms and can spread the virus without even knowing. And the vast majority - 70% - of cases are caught in the home as it spreads much more easily in small indoor spaces.

As restrictions ease it has never been more important to follow the guidance and play your part in stopping the spread of coronavirus. By following the rules for a bit longer, we will all be able to get back to normal sooner.

We know most people are being responsible – thank you for everything you're continuing to do. For anyone who needs a reminder of what you are and are not currently allowed to do, please see www.doncaster.gov.uk/coronavirus

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19

- Because the virus can spread easily, your child **MUST NOT** come to school if they have a high temperature, a new continuous cough, a loss or change to their sense of taste or smell.
- Anyone in your household who has these symptoms **MUST** stay home and get a PCR test as soon as possible. You must return straight home after having the test. All members of the household must stay home and await the test result.
- If anyone who lives at your address tests positive **EVERYONE MUST** stay home. This means not going out for shopping, exercise, work, school or meeting friends and family – even if you feel well.
- To book a free test visit www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or call 119

Now that many families have access to Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) we are aware of some situations where when children feel unwell and start to have symptoms, they are being tested at home using LFTs. It is important that:

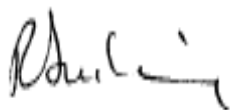
- LFT tests are **NOT** to be used if anyone has symptoms
- Please book a test at one of the testing sites if you or anyone in your household becomes symptomatic.
- LFTs are used to find those people who have the virus and do not have symptoms. They are not a test which is used if you are symptomatic and will not detect the virus in all cases. It is really important that you book a PCR test.

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Thank you for your continued hard work and dedication to our young people.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Suckling', with a stylized, cursive script.

Rupert Suckling
Director of Public Health