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Our Ref: 10 – CB/SR
Your Ref:



3rd November 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: COVID-19 measures in schools

COVID-19 cases in Hartlepool are high and we are seeing an increase in the number of cases in school-age children. It is really important that we do everything we can to keep our children in school and minimise any disruption.

We know that the vaccination programme is working in preventing serious disease and deaths, however, the vaccine does not stop people from catching or passing on the virus. Older people and those with underlying health problems are more likely to become ill and our hospitals are seeing a rise in the number of people admitted with COVID-19.

In light of this, we are recommending some additional actions are taken to keep our children and community safe. As well as continuing with the current measures, we are also advising that:

In secondary schools:

- All adults and pupils wear a face covering in all communal areas unless exempt;
- Staff and pupils should test themselves for COVID-19 twice a week, and more frequently if they asked to do so.

In primary schools:

- All adults wear a face covering in all communal areas unless exempt;
- Staff to test themselves for COVID-19 twice a week, and more frequently if they are asked to do so.

All schools:

- To consider limiting or pausing whole school events such as assemblies;
- Regular testing of secondary school pupils and staff in all schools;
- Keeping windows open in classrooms as much as possible;
- Encouraging regular hand washing;
- Asking close contacts of positive cases to take a PCR test.

We will review these recommendations regularly and talk to schools to see if they are working.

The vaccination offer for 12-15 year olds is also happening in Hartlepool. We would encourage you to complete consent forms sent to you by your child's school if you are asked. Young people aged 12-15-year old can also book a vaccination online (www.nhs.uk/covidvaccination) or via 119.

On top of the actions schools are taking, there are things you can do to continue to support your child's school such as:

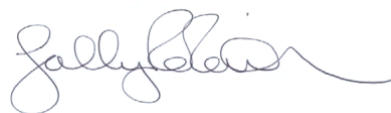
1. Encouraging your child to take lateral flow tests twice a week if they are in secondary school;
2. Support your child to wear a face covering if they are in secondary school, both in school and in enclosed indoor spaces in public;
3. Consider the benefits of the vaccination programme for your child if they are between the ages of 12-15.
4. If you or your child develop symptoms of COVID-19 book a free NHS test as soon as possible (www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). You can also phone 119. Most importantly stay at home until it is time to take your test.

We would like to thank you for everything you've done to keep your family and community safe, and for your patience in continuing to support schools during this challenging time.

Yours sincerely,



CRAIG BLUNDRED
Director of Public Health



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Director of Children's and Joint
Commissioning Services