

Parent / Carer

London Borough of Havering
Main Road, Romford RM1 3BD

email: CouncillorRobert.Benham@havering.gov.uk

Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Date: July 2021

We hope you and your family are safe and well at this difficult time. Many of you continue to face significant challenges, and we thank you for your continued support to the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

You will be aware that the Prime Minister has confirmed that the final step of the Government's coronavirus lockdown-easing roadmap will be going ahead on 19th July. Many of the legal restrictions imposed to control the pandemic will be lifted from this date, but in line with Government guidance, our schools and early years settings will continue to put in place control measures to reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19. It is essential that you continue to follow these measures to ensure the safety of your child, the staff, and the wider community.

From the start of the new academic year, some control measures currently in place in all schools will be dropped e.g. keeping children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). However, if there is a local outbreak, measures may need to be re-introduced for a temporary period in the school or early years setting affected.

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning with soap and water or hand sanitiser will continue, as will the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach to respiratory hygiene, and more regular cleaning of areas and equipment.

It will remain essential that children do not come into school or early years settings if they have [COVID-19 symptoms](#), have had a positive test result, or have been told to isolate by NHS Test and Trace for any other reason. If your child develops [COVID-19 symptoms](#) during the day, they will be sent home and must follow all relevant public health advice before they can re-attend.

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection, and over the summer, you should continue to test regularly, especially if your child is attending schools and early years settings that remain open, such as summer schools and holiday activities based in schools.

As children will potentially mix with lots of other people during the summer holidays, all secondary school pupils will receive 2 lateral flow device (LFD) tests, 3 to 5 days apart, on their return in the new academic year, and secondary schools will communicate these arrangements direct with families. Secondary pupils should then continue to test twice weekly at home until the end of September, when the Government will review the need for further routine testing.

Primary pupils should also get a test before they come back to school in September to reduce the risk of people without symptoms unknowingly spreading the virus to others in the school and in their community. LFD tests can be obtained from many local pharmacies, and further information on testing can be found on the [Havering Council Covic-19 testing website](#).

Children with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the [stay at home](#) guidance. They will also need to [get a free PCR test to confirm if they have COVID-19](#). Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive LFD test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the child can return to school or early years setting, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

From 19th July, close contacts in school will be identified via NHS Test and Trace, which means that schools and early years settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school and early years setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact.

From 16th August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old and fully vaccinated adults will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, close contacts will be advised to take a PCR test, and we would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if asked to do so.

The requirement to wear a face covering on the Transport for London network will remain compulsory when the Government's existing national requirement expires on Monday 19 July, [unless you are exempt for age, health and disability reasons](#).

The delta variant is more transmissible and more likely to result in severe disease. But vaccination, with both doses, continues to provide excellent protection against severe illness. Anyone aged 18 and above is now eligible, and we strongly recommend everyone eligible gets vaccinated, and encourages family and friends to do likewise.

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school. Parents and carers travelling abroad over the summer should bear in mind the impact on their child's education which may result from any requirement to quarantine or isolate upon return.

Our school and early years & childcare staff continue to work very hard to ensure that education is not disrupted. Together, we can protect against the many harms caused by the pandemic including the longer-term impact on the education, wellbeing and wider development of our children and young people.

Thank you for your help and continued support.

Kind regards,



Cllr Robert Benham
Deputy Leader of the Council
Cabinet Member for Education,
Children & Families



Mark Ansell
Director of Public Health

