

Sally Robinson, Director

Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Civic Centre
Hartlepool
TS24 8AY

Tel: 01429 523732

www.hartlepool.gov.uk
DX 60669 Hartlepool - 1

Contact Officer: Sally Robinson
Email: sally.robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk

Our Ref: SR/JO/704
Your Ref:



6 January 2022

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: COVID-19 measures in schools

We hope you had a good Christmas break and New Year and that your children have returned to school refreshed after the break.

As you will be aware, COVID-19 cases in Hartlepool have been rising quickly over the last few weeks due to the Omicron variant. We are seeing higher case rates now than we have seen at any point in the pandemic so far. Whilst the Omicron variant appears to lead to a smaller number of people becoming seriously ill, the high rate of cases means we will still see many people admitted to hospital.

We are working with your child's school to support them to stay open so pupils can continue learning whilst minimising the opportunities for the virus to spread in school. This is in addition to the government guidance that has been issued and requires the following measures:

- Secondary school pupils (Year 7 and above) wearing face coverings in class and whilst moving around the school.
- Secondary and primary school staff wearing face coverings whilst moving around the school.
- Pupils wearing face coverings whilst travelling on transport to and from school.
- Pupils in secondary schools testing twice a week using lateral flow tests.

Because of the high case rate in Hartlepool, we have also asked schools to do the following:

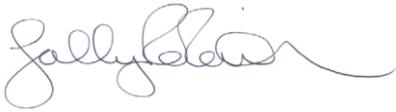
- Consider limiting or pausing whole school events such as assemblies;
- Regular testing of secondary school pupils and staff in all schools;
- Keeping windows open in classrooms as much as possible;
- Encouraging regular hand washing.

Vaccinations are the most important way we can reduce the severity and spread of the virus. If your child is eligible for a vaccination and hasn't yet had one, we urge you to take up the vaccination offer. Vaccinations are a crucial tool which will not only protect your child and family but others in the community as well. If your child is aged 12 or over, first and second vaccinations are available to be booked via the national vaccination booking service at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>.

As always, if your child develops symptoms or tests positive on a lateral flow or PCR test, they should isolate in line with the current guidance.

As always, thank you for your support in keeping your community safe and supporting schools in what continues to be a very challenging time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Sally Robinson'.

SALLY ROBINSON
Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C. Blundred'.

CRAIG BLUNDRED
Director of Public Health