

Further to my Newsletter on Friday, please see up to date information from Public Health England below to support Parents/Carers in making correct decisions whether to send children into school

COVID-19 information from Public Health England

North Tyneside like all other areas across the North East has seen significantly increasing rates of infection over the last few weeks and there is now widespread community transmission of the virus.

Working closely with North Tyneside Council and Public Health England the school continues to ensure that we operate safely, and that we minimise the spread of the virus. This includes maintaining high standards of hygiene inside and outside classroom settings, grouping children in 'bubbles' and maintaining social distancing where ever possible.

As parents or carers, you can support the endeavours to help control the virus in North Tyneside by adhering to the national restrictions, maintaining social distancing and good hand hygiene.

We are also asking that you please keep your child at home if anyone else in the household is suspected of having or has had a positive test for COVID-19, or if your child has any of the following symptoms of Covid-19:

- A fever – this means hot to the touch on the chest or back
- A continuous cough - a dry cough and coughing a lot for over an hour with more than 3 episodes per day
- Loss or change of taste and smell - this means no smell or taste, or things smell or taste different to normal

It is important that the whole household self isolates until anyone in the household with symptoms get tested as soon as any symptoms start to occur via www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or calling 119. **Only people with symptoms should get tested.**

If the test is positive the person will need self isolate for 10 days, the rest of the household for 14 days.

The action we will take in school if a member of staff or a pupil has a positive test result for COVID-19 is as follows

- As soon as we are informed of the positive test result, we will carry out a risk assessment with Public Health colleagues to identify any other children or staff who may have been a **close contact** with the confirmed case.
- If your child is **not identified as a close contact** of the confirmed case we will contact you to tell you that you do not need to make any change to your usual routine and that it is safe for your child to continue to attend school.
- If your **child is identified as having been in close contact** with the confirmed case we contact you and ask you to keep your child **at home to self-isolate for 14 days**, in line with government guidance. **Your child DOES NOT need to be tested.** Other members of your household or contacts of your child DO NOT need to self isolate and can continue normal activities. If your child does develop symptoms while self isolating then the household should self isolate and the child should get a test.

The evidence from the Chief Medical Officer is very clear that the balance of risk is strongly in favour of children attending school and that serious illness or deaths in children and teenagers from Covid-19 are extremely rare. Therefore, it is really important that all children continue to attend school or college (unless asked to self-isolate) for their educational progress, for their wellbeing and for their wider development.