

Date: 5th March 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

I have written to you on two previous occasions recently and wanted to make contact as all pupils are welcomed back to school on Monday 8th March (subject to testing and staggered starts in schools with secondary aged pupils).

Firstly, I want to acknowledge what a fantastic job you as parents and your children have done in your engagement in remote learning since early January. I do not underestimate how difficult this has been for some of you, but I want to say well done and thank you. The work you have all done during this time will have contributed to keeping our children's education on track.

Lockdown has presented many difficulties and I want to reassure you that as your children return to school, we will be focussing on emotional well-being to ensure pupils are ready to begin school-based learning again. Therefore, it is crucial that your children return to school on their designated date. There is a robust testing programme in place and this will help all our pupils and families stay safe, including any adults in the home that have been identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV).

From March the 8th the only pupils who should stay at home and continue with remote learning are pupils unable to attend in line with public health advice to self-isolate or have been notified that they are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV); your child's school may ask to see the letter that informed you your child falls into this category.

School leaders have invested considerable time in risk assessing their premises to ensure they are as safe as possible for you and your children. Despite the overall national reduction in cases, it is important that you are clear on the rules and regulations set out by your children's school in relation to dropping off and collecting children and also gathering outside the school gates or in the playground. These are potential areas of virus transmission and social distancing is still required. It would really help if you can wear face coverings when dropping off and collecting your children.

Central Bedfordshire Council

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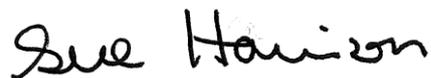
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It is possible over the coming weeks that schools may be forced to close bubbles and send some children home if positive cases are identified; they will keep you well informed and will follow the national guidance released by the Department for Education and Public Health England if and when these incidents occur. Remote learning will continue if these situations occur however, it may be different from what you will have been used to; please be reassured it will still adhere to the Department for Education requirements.

Should you have any questions or concerns about specific school provision or your child's return to school, please refer to the specific school's website or discuss your concerns with the school directly.

I look forward to all your children being back in Central Bedfordshire schools and continuing their learning. Thank you for all your support so far.

Yours sincerely



Sue Harrison
Director of Children's Services