



Stage 4 of Government Roadmap

Dear Parents / Carers,

Following on from the Prime Minister's Announcement on television last night about the 'cautious' lifting of lockdown restrictions I wanted to write to you to explain what this might mean for schools and to ask for your continued support as we move to the end of term.

I wrote to you recently about COVID rates in our local community, and you may well have seen articles online in Knowsley News describing how cases have continued to rise in the Borough. It remains important that in these last few weeks of term we all do everything we can to prevent infection and keep children in school.

As you know the Delta variant spreads very easily, and there are still some important measures Head Teachers will need to keep in place to keep schools as safe as possible in the last few weeks of term. The government have been clear that whilst the lifting of restrictions will go ahead from the 19th of July, we should all proceed 'cautiously' and continue to demonstrate restraint to reduce the risk of infection.

Government guidance published to support Outbreak management and school decision making clearly states that if school remains open after the 19th of July, measures such as bubbles can remain in place until the end of term. It also advises schools to continue with measures that promote good hygiene, maintain cleaning regimes, keep spaces well ventilated and follow public health guidance on testing, track and trace, management of positive cases and self-isolation. Schools will communicate to you their expectations in relation to these things and I would ask that you support them in this work.

Head Teachers and Governing Bodies are currently reviewing their risk assessments and making decisions about how their school will operate now and, in the future,, in line with Government advice. They have a legal duty, within Health and Safety legislation, to put in place any measures that reduces risks in school and this will be at the forefront of their decision making. This may well mean, that as each school is different, with different building, staffing and student needs that approaches differ from school to school. If you are uncertain about anything school asks of you and your child, please let a teacher or senior staff member know and they will work with you to help resolve any problems and reduce anxiety.

Please also remember that sometimes, in considering infection rates and risk schools may well have to make decisions to do things differently. We know that this has led to some disappointment for children and families when events have been

changed or cancelled. Please remember that schools do not make this decision lightly and do so with the best of intentions – to keep children safe.

Of course, an important way to reduce the levels of illness in our community is by making good use of testing and vaccination facilities. Evidence tells us that vaccination and regular testing are our best defence against this virus.

You may well have seen online the 'Grab a Jab' campaign with details of clinics across Knowsley that makes it easier for you to get vaccinated. The vaccination is currently available to all over 18s and if you haven't yet booked your appointment, you can do so by visiting www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or by [ringing 119](tel:119). You can find out more by visiting www.knowsleynews.co.uk or by following one of the Council's social media accounts on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook.

Remember also that as we move to the 'full' re-opening of society from the 19th of July, testing continues to be an important way to keep ourselves safe. If you have a child of secondary school age you can ask school for test kits to use at home over the summer holiday.

Alternatively, test kits for the whole family can also be collected from one of the many testing centres across the borough. I have listed the locations and opening times below:

Kirkby

11a Market Square, Kirkby, L32 8RG

Huyton

Unit 1, 22 Derby Road, L36 9UJ

Halewood

The Halewood Centre, Roseheath Drive, L26 9UH

Prescot

Prescot One Stop Shop, Prescot Shopping Centre L34 5GA

All sites operating the following hours:

Tuesday – Thursday 09:30 – 16:30, Friday 09:30 – 16:00 and Saturday 10:00 – 16:00

Tests can also be easily ordered online and will be delivered to your home directly via the government website: www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests. For more information on when and where to get tested in Knowsley, visit www.knowsleynews.co.uk/remind-when-and-where-to-get-tested/

Remember, it's important to get tested before meeting up with other people from outside of your household and also to log your test result at www.gov.uk/repot-covid19-result (regardless of whether is positive, negative or void). Logging your results helps us all understand what infection rates look like within our community. Please remember that if you receive a positive test result, you should stay at home and book a PCR test through www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or ring 119. If your PCR test comes back positive, you, your household and close contacts must self-isolate for 10 days. This is to prevent the further spread of the virus.



Knowsley Council

Thank you once again for your continued support,
I wish you all a happy and healthy summer break when it arrives!
Yours faithfully

J. Alberta

Assistant Executive Director Education & Early Help