

11 November 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

As we enter the final weeks of 2021, and in the run-up to Christmas and other celebrations, I would like to thank you and your children and young people for continuing to play your part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in Herefordshire and to keep our schools open.

All schools in Herefordshire want to keep their pupils in school and to do this it may mean that some of the traditional Christmas activities may need to be modified or will not be able to go ahead this year. Schools will need to undertake risk assessments on any activity and may change the way events are run, for example a reduced number or not inviting parents to attend live performances. In addition, if cases rise in a school, in line with government guidance, we may at short notice advise that certain activities do not go ahead.

As parents, please continue to:

- Remain aware of any additional measures we may have in place and support our requests to maintain social distancing and wear face coverings when appropriate
- Stay at home and **get a PCR test** if you, or a household member, have a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of smell or taste. To book your PCR test, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or phone 119.
- Contacts of cases outside the home should also follow the advice to get a PCR test. As we know that household transmission is extremely common, we are advising household contacts of cases to not go to school and remain at home until they receive a negative PCR test, and then to complete daily LFD tests for 7 days
- Take part in lateral flow testing 2 times per week if you are a parent or are a secondary school or college student. To order your tests to be delivered to your home or find your nearest test site, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>
- Let your school know as soon as possible if you have a positive test result, either on a lateral flow or PCR test

Finally, we would encourage everyone who is eligible to take up the offer of a vaccination. Information for young people by young people can be found at <https://www.everythingcovid.info>. Pupils aged 12-15 years will be offered vaccination in a school setting, however if you miss this or prefer to be vaccinated off site, you can book online. Please visit <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/covid19vaccination> for more information.

Please support your school in these tough decisions that they are making to keep you and your family safe, and be aware that if cases are rising quickly decisions may be made at the last minute to postpone or cancel individual activities and events.

Yours faithfully,

Ceri Morgan (Assistant Director Education Development and Skills)

Dr Rebecca Howell-Jones (Acting Director for Public Health in Herefordshire)