

Children & Families Directorate
Westfields
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Date: 13 October 2021

OUR REF: JFMT\gfp

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to update you on the latest position in relation to Covid cases and transmission in our schools and colleges. You will probably have picked up through the media that the number of positive cases of school aged children continues to increase, although very few become very ill or need hospitalisation. Across Cheshire East, the rate amongst children and young people is significantly higher than the rate in our general population.

The council's education team, public health and our schools have worked closely together to continue to keep children safe and avoid the need to send any full classes or year groups home with a clear ambition to minimise the continued disruption to children's education.

We have already put in place additional testing capacity into schools and worked with them to develop rapid 'in school' screening in secondary schools to enable positive cases to be identified quickly and for these children and young people to isolate.

The Delta variant of Covid is much easier to transmit, particularly within households where family relationships mean that parents and children are in close contact. We recognise the anxiety in families when there are children and young people in class who live in households with positive cases. We are also aware of the challenges many schools are facing in terms of staff absences affecting their ability to keep classes/schools open.

Due to the continuing increase in cases, we have therefore introduced some enhanced temporary measures with immediate effect. This letter sets out the changes we are recommending.

- In view of the high levels of infection within the borough and our neighbouring local authorities, we are recommending that where one individual in a household tests positive, **children and young people from that household who attends school or college** should:-
 - Limit their social contacts.
 - Arrange for a PCR test and they should not attend school or college for a minimum of 5 days.
 - If the test result is positive the person should self-isolate as required by law.
- We have also introduced enhanced measures in schools, based on a review of individual school case rates. School measures will include:-
 - Face masks in communal areas and classrooms depending on the number of cases.
 - Reduce mixing in assemblies and other indoor activities across classes /year groups

We would like to emphasise these will be applied on an individual school basis depending on infection rates.

These are temporary measures to support schools and families and have not been taken lightly. We will continue to monitor the case numbers in schools and other education settings, and we will step down these additional measures as soon as infection rates start to reduce.

The vaccination programme for young people aged 12-15 has now started. The programme is delivered by the school age immunisation team from [Wirral Community Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust](#) (WCHC). We would encourage you to consider providing consent for your child.

Information on school age Covid-19 vaccination and consent can be found on the Trust's website, including:

- [Guidance for parents \(including FAQs\): Vaccination programme for children and young people.](#)
- [UK Chief Medical Officers' advice on the COVID-19 vaccination for young people aged 12-15.](#)
- [Information and resources for young people.](#)

If you have any queries about the Covid-19 vaccination programme please contact the school age immunisation team via email: wcnt.immunisation@nhs.net

Successful implementation of the vaccination of young people in this age group will be a key factor in reducing positive cases and transmission.

Finally, we would like to emphasise our commitment to minimising the disruption to children and young people’s education and health and wellbeing. These measures are introduced so we can ensure the safety of children and staff, maximise attendance at our schools with reduced transmission and ensure they remain open.

We encourage you to follow the advice provided.

Yours faithfully



Jacky Forster
Director of Education and 14-19 Skills



Matt Tyrer
Director of Public Health