

My Ref: JP/AM/AH

February 2021

Dear parent/carer

I wanted to write to you following the Prime Minister's announcement that from 8 March, all pupils and students in England should attend school or college.

Headteachers, principals and staff will be taking additional measures to ensure that children and young people can learn in as safe an environment as possible. Pupils and students, staff and parents have been adapting to remote learning, although for some this has not been easy. Most children and young people will be eager to return to learning in the classroom; however, if you have concerns then you should contact the school or college.

As a father home-educating two children with the support of Staffordshire schools, I know it has not been easy. I am continually amazed at how resilient you have been, and continue to be, throughout this pandemic.

The reopening of our schools and colleges to all pupils and students has to be done in a safe way. That is why it is important that we all continue to follow the guidance at home and at school. New variants of coronavirus (COVID-19) are more transmissible, therefore if we all follow the rules we can reduce any further disruption to children and staff, and keep our schools and colleges open.

I am asking you to support your school or college by following their rules. They will be sharing their new arrangements with you once they have been finalised. Please continue to follow the current routines until the new plans have been communicated and come into effect.



As each institution is different their plans and rules will vary, but there are some things we all must do:

- remember social distancing and don't congregate at school gates at drop off and pick up times
- engage in any testing programmes your school may have in place
- encourage your children to follow the school rules including any face coverings and class or group bubbles
- if you or your children are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please do not attend school. Instead, stay home and book a test.
- if you have tested positive for the virus your children should not attend school for 10 days of you showing symptoms.
- if your child has been sent home from their class bubble and told to isolate, your child must stay at home and not go out, whether they are experiencing symptoms or not. They must also stay home regardless of whether they have had a negative test. The rest of the family does not need to isolate unless your child develops symptoms.

The earlier that children and young people with symptoms stay off school/college, the fewer other children and staff will need to isolate as a precaution. This way we can reduce any potential disruption to other children and staff and help keep schools and colleges open.

I remain immensely grateful for the support you are all giving to schools and colleges. By working together and following the guidance, we can ensure we keep our children, teachers, lecturers and other staff safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Price', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Price
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)