

My ref: Parent Letter – March Reopening
Date: 4th March 2021
Contact: Please contact your school
for more information



People & Communities and Public Health

To parents/carers of pupils in
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
Schools

Dear Parent / Carer,

From the 8th March, all pupils are being asked to return to face-to-face teaching in schools and colleges.

Since a peak in January, levels of coronavirus infection have declined both nationally and locally, leading to the decision that pupils can return to school. We will continue to monitor infection rates in schools and the wider community on a daily basis so that immediate action can be taken to manage outbreaks and stop the spread of the virus.

	4 th Dec	5 th Jan	26 th Feb
Cambridge City	67.3	529.7	71.3
East Cambs	76.8	472.0	56.8
Fenland	128.6	509.6	195.4
Huntingdonshire	47.8	540.6	95.0
South Cambs	60.3	464.5	49.7
Peterborough	204.2	510.2	195.8

Incident rates per 100,000 of the population – this includes outbreaks in care homes and workplaces.

The overwhelming majority of children and young people have no symptoms, or very mild illness only, if they are infected with Covid-19. Returning to school or college is vital for their educational progress, for their wellbeing and for their wider development, but it is important that we all continue to operate within the government lock down restrictions.

Reopening

All secondary pupils and college students will be offered twice weekly coronavirus testing. Those who consent to testing should return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result. **In order to keep everyone safe it is important to take part in the testing programme.** If however you or your child (if they are aged over 18) do not consent, they will not be stopped from returning to school, in line with their school or college's arrangements.

In addition to coronavirus testing in school, all members of households, childcare bubbles and support bubbles of primary and secondary school staff and pupils are eligible for rapid coronavirus tests in the community, even if nobody in the household has symptoms. Details of this initiative can be [found here](#).

All secondary pupils and college students will be asked to wear face-coverings (unless exempt) to reduce the spread of the virus.

Primary age pupils are not being routinely tested nor will be required to wear face coverings in school or on transport.

To continue to manage the risks of contagion, nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges will continue to implement the range of [protective measures](#) which were in place throughout the autumn term. We have further strengthened these measures to help decrease the disruption the virus causes to education. Current evidence suggests that these measures are still the right ones to take. In addition, all staff in schools are now tested twice weekly.

Other than in exceptional cases, or where a pupil's absence is otherwise authorised, it will be the school or setting's expectation that pupils attend as normal. It is important that you discuss any concerns on attendance with your school as soon as possible to avoid further escalation.

As throughout this period, every school and setting will manage their own approach to delivering education, reflecting local context and circumstances including staff absence. Schools and settings will work with the local authority and their academy trust to update risk assessments and regularly review arrangements. By taking this approach, risks for pupils and their households will be kept as low as reasonably practicable.

The majority of our schools have remained open throughout the coronavirus pandemic, so we have already seen that protective measures and bubbles are effective at reducing the spread of the virus. We are now ready to scale this up. Your child's school or setting will advise you about any changes to routines, including for dropping pupils off and collecting them at the end of the day, and transport to school. If individual schools or settings need to operate phased returns, or to alter timetables temporarily, the details of this and the reasons for it will be made clear in advance.

Government advice on how to make education settings as safe as possible can be [found here](#).

Shielding

We know from growing evidence that many children identified at the start of the pandemic as being clinically extremely vulnerable, are not at increased risk of serious consequences from coronavirus (COVID-19). Accordingly, children are gradually being removed from the shielding patient list as appropriate, following review with a clinician. If your child is confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable, they are advised not to attend school or college until further notice.

Maintaining the Safety of your Family

To keep staff and children safe, we ask that you continue to follow the national lockdown rules. Specifically, we ask the following -

- Limit visits to schools sites – we request that only one parent bring your child and arrive at school on time and leave the site promptly. Please follow the advice given by schools on collecting your children.
- Please return home promptly – play-dates and outdoor play or meeting in groups remains prohibited under the current government restrictions. The Local Authority will support schools to take robust action when they consider that parents are not following the rules of lockdown.
- Ensure you follow preventative measures at home including handwashing as soon as you enter your home.
- Ensure your child/children follow the rules if accessing school transport, including wearing face covering if they are secondary age and above.

The safety of our children, parents and school staff is, and always will be, our number one priority. We very much look forward to welcoming all children back to school on the 8th March.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Lewis
Service Director – Education
Cambridgeshire County Council and
Peterborough City Council



Dr Liz Robin
Director of Public Health
Cambridgeshire County Council and
Peterborough City Council