



**Knowsley Council**

10th January 2022

Dear Parents / Carers

Happy New Year and welcome back to a new school term. I hope you have managed to relax and enjoy the festivities.

We are entering a New Year and a new school term in a very difficult position again given the rising number of COVID-19 cases and in particular, the Omicron variant which is spreading much quicker than other variants.

As you know, our schools have worked extremely hard to provide safe learning environments for everyone and they are regularly reviewing their risk assessment against the changing Government guidance to ensure they are aligned.

Given the Government guidance that has been issued over the last few weeks, I just wanted to remind you of the key changes.

### **Testing**

From 14 December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a lateral flow test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result.

Regular (twice weekly) testing continues to be important in order to identify people who have the virus but do not have symptoms. Testing kits are available from secondary schools, pharmacies and you can also order them online through the Government's website.

### **Face coverings**

Face coverings help to protect the wearer and others against the spread of infection because they cover the nose and mouth, which are the main confirmed sources of transmission of COVID-19. Face coverings should be worn by pupils (in Year 7 and above) in classrooms and when moving around the school premises. All staff in any education setting and adult visitors should also wear a face covering when moving around the premises in communal areas such as corridors. Pupils in Year 7 and above must also wear a face covering when travelling on public transport and should wear it on dedicated transport to and from school.

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## **Control measures**

It's important that we all maintain good hygiene to help prevent the spread of the virus. This includes regular hand washing and carrying tissues to catch and bin coughs and sneezes.

Our schools are continuing to maintain enhanced cleaning regimes and ensuring there is good ventilation throughout the building.

## **Symptoms and what do to**

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a high temperature, new or persistent cough and a loss of taste or smell. If your child develops symptoms or tests positive, they should not come into school and follow the advice outlined above regarding regular testing.

## **Something to look forward to – Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture**

Given the last two years we have had, I just wanted to share something positive that we can all get involved in.

In 2022, Knowsley will be hosting the Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture and we have an exciting 12 months ahead of us. Details of A New Dawn and the other events planned covering arts, comedy, theatre, music, sport and food can be found at [www.cultureknowsley.co.uk](http://www.cultureknowsley.co.uk) or @cultureknowsley on social media.

COVID-19 continues to present such a huge challenge to us all and certainly the running of events is no exception. The safety of everyone attending and indeed delivering our events will remain our top priority and as you would expect we continue to work closely with our Public Health team to respond to the situation and to changing government guidance.

The outdoor nature of most of our events is a big benefit but if we need to, we will make tweaks and update our advice.

I hope that many of you take the opportunity to get as involved as possible in our year and I look forward to seeing many of you, and your children and families, at these wonderful events.

## **Finally . . .**

I would just like to once again extend my thanks you to for your continued support over the last few years. Ensuring our children and young people continue to attend school regularly is a key priority for us all and this has only been possible thanks to everyone working together – you and your family, our schools and Council officers.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Harvey', written in a cursive style.

**Cllr Margaret Harvey**  
**Cabinet Member for Children's Services**