



The Best That We Can Be
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Dear Parents and Carers,

Message from Dr Arif Rajpura at Public Health Blackpool

Recently, you may have heard announcements from the Prime Minister about living with Covid-19 and the Government's plan for removing remaining legal restrictions. Although this may sound to some like a major change, in reality, removing legal restrictions does not change public health measures and guidance. It is particularly important to note that these changes do not affect existing long-term advice that children who are ill should not be sent to school, especially if they have symptoms which might indicate other infectious gastroenteric or respiratory diseases.

Living with Covid-19 requires everyone to continue to follow safer behaviours to manage risk. This includes guidance that anyone who tests positive is advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days and until 2 negative test results are received on consecutive days. The Government is able to take this step now because of the success of the vaccination programme. Therefore, I would strongly encourage any of you who have not yet taken up the vaccine to consider doing so now.

What does this mean for schools?

- The guidance to self-isolate when you test positive for Covid-19 is still in place and hasn't changed. Pupils with symptoms should book a PCR test which will still be available until the 1st of April. Parents should not send their child to school if they have symptoms or receive a positive test result. If parents insist on bringing their child to school, schools can refuse children entry if, in their reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection.
- Parents and carers should be aware of a change relating to close contacts. Those who are fully vaccinated and are identified as a close contact no longer need to test daily for 7 days.
- Where the number of positive cases in a school substantially increases, parents and carers might be advised that additional measures are being introduced. Schools will keep parents and carers updated regarding any changing situation/measures.

Finally, I would strongly encourage all eligible children and staff to ensure that they are fully vaccinated.

Kind regards,

Dr Arif Rajpura
Director of Public Health Blackpool

