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Date: 4th December 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Coronavirus update

As we approach the Christmas holiday it is important that we continue to work together to ensure we can all enjoy the festive break. In the last 4 weeks infection rates in Hounslow have started to reduce, but not at the pace we need to protect the health service over the holidays and reduce the ongoing disruption to school activity. We need your help to continue this reduction in Covid-19 cases, to avoid moving to Tier 3 and stop the avoidable impact this is having on school life and the education of your children.

We all know the important role that school has for children and young people; education, play, development, social and emotional wellbeing. A single positive Covid-19 case in a school can result in the loss of education for a class and year group; education from home is not comparable to education in school. Even brief periods of time out of education can have a lasting impact.

Your child's school staff have been working incredibly hard since March, many schools have been open throughout the holidays and staff have put arrangements in place to protect the school so that your children have a COVID secure learning environment. The Council education team and public health have worked closely with Headteachers managing each positive COVID case, identifying contacts who need to isolate as per the national guidance and ensuring they continue their education whilst at home. The positive cases we identify are usually the result of infection transmitted in the community, especially in households, however the impact is being felt by schools and the wider school community; some of this disruption is avoidable.

There have been cases of families not adhering to self-isolating guidelines putting others health and other children's' education at risk. We need this to stop and ask you to follow the rules.

As we approach the end of term there is a risk that if children do test positive, they and their identified school contacts may have to isolate over the holiday. It is a legal requirement to isolate if you test positive or you are a contact of someone who is positive. Let's avoid this by taking the following actions:

- **Maintain social distancing** at school gates - keep 2 metres apart and wear a face covering
- **Wear a face covering** when you visit indoor venues e.g. shops or where you are unable to socially distance outside unless you are exempt from wearing a face covering
- **Work from home** if you can

- **Do not bring your child to school if they are unwell or you are unwell**, especially if you have the symptoms of COVID. Be cautious and get tested and don't bring your child to school until you receive a negative test result. To book a test go to: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>
- **Follow guidance on self-isolating** if you or another member of your household has symptoms or tests positive for coronavirus or you are asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace - you must follow that instruction
- **Where you can, walk or cycle**, reduce the number of journeys you make
- **Don't mix socially indoors** with anybody outside your household or support bubble
- **Don't travel to a tier 3 area** unless it is for education, work or for care purposes
- **Do not mix with anyone outside your household or support bubble if you attend a place of worship**

The Hounslow council website has coronavirus advice and updates, sign up to receive Covid-19 e-newsletter at <https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/coronavirus> or keep up to date with the latest government guidelines at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

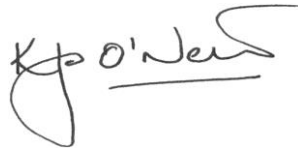
Your children's school will be able to give you more information about the changes they have made to reduce risk. They have played their part; play yours.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Tom Bruce  
Cabinet Member for Education,  
Children and Youth Services



Kelly O'Neill  
Director of Public Health