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Dear Parent or Carer

Number of pupils with Covid symptoms is going up across our county's schools

Thank you for your effort and support in tackling COVID-19 infections during what has been another challenging academic year.

We are writing to you now, because we need your ongoing support as we head in to the final weeks of the school term.

Thankfully, the number of Gloucestershire residents becoming seriously ill from Covid is now much lower, but as we start to mix more, the number of infections is rising sharply, particularly in our county's schools.

Schools continue to do all they can to keep Covid out of the classroom. The health and wellbeing, education and safety of pupils are always their top priority. This sometimes means that they have to make difficult decisions.

All schools receive regular updates from the Department of Education (DfE) which include guidance and advice on how to run events safely. Many end of term events are planned over the coming weeks and schools have reviewed their risk assessments to include these activities, such as sports days and leavers' events.

It is important to remember that the risk assessment process will vary from school to school and will be dependent on a number of factors such as whether a school is currently experiencing an outbreak, case rates in their community, on-site facilities, the size and layout of the school site and whether they have sufficient staff to safely manage events involving large numbers of spectators/audiences. This may mean that some schools will

have to make the difficult decision to postpone or cancel events, or exclude spectators, to make sure the events can run in the safest possible way.

Whilst we understand that it is disappointing and frustrating when an event has to be cancelled or is not open to parents and carers, we urge you to support your school in the decisions that they make. Schools do a fantastic job, under challenging circumstances, to ensure that they remain open until the end of term so that your children can attend and continue their learning.

For the latest guidance on what you can do to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, please see attached document.

Yours sincerely



Sarah Scott,
Executive Director
of Adult Social Care and Public Health



Chris Spencer
Director of Children's Services

Here is what you can do to prevent catching and spreading COVID-19.

- **The four week pause at step three on the Government’s Road map means that many measures remain in place.** This includes: social distancing, working from home if you can and restrictions on the numbers able to meet up indoors (up to six people or two households)
- **Keeping a safe distance from other parents and carers is crucial in and around the school site.** Please wear a face covering when dropping off and collecting your children, and wash your hands regularly before leaving the house and when you arrive home
- **Everyone aged 18 and over in England is now eligible for their COVID-19 vaccination.** When it is your time you will be invited by your GP to book an appointment. There is no need to contact your doctors – or go out of county for your appointment. **You need BOTH doses of the vaccine to be fully protected!**
- **Twice-weekly rapid testing helps to detect cases of Covid in people who have no symptoms.** You should do this even if you have had one or both vaccines, as you may still become infected and spread the virus to others. **Visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/testing to find out more**
- **If you or anyone you live with test positive for COVID-19 or develop a high temperature, new and continuous cough or change or loss in sense of taste or smell your household should self-isolate immediately** and book a PCR Covid test via the Government portal
- **If you are told your child is a close contact of a positive Covid case, they will now be asked to take a PCR test even if they don’t have symptoms.** Crucially, even if that result comes back negative, your child should still isolate for the full ten days. The household of a close contact does not need to stay at home if the close contact test is negative, but are urged to keep taking all the necessary steps to keep safe.