

21 September 2020

New Government restrictions on city households mixing

Dear parents and carers,

It's wonderful to see so many children and young people in school this term – for many, this will be the first time they will have been in full time education since the start of the coronavirus pandemic back in March.

All our schools agree that it's great to have them back!

We hope that everything is going as smoothly as it possibly can for you and your children; everyone is doing a fantastic job in truly exceptional circumstances and we would like to place on record our thanks to our teachers and support staff – and of course to you and your children – for making this happen.

We are writing to you to because, as you will sadly be aware, coronavirus hasn't gone away.

Covid-19 infections in our city have risen fivefold in a fortnight to over 60 cases per 100,000 residents last week and, as you will may know, from tomorrow (Tuesday 22 September) the Government will be placing legal restrictions on households in Wolverhampton mixing.

This is important because evidence suggests that around 90% of cases involve household-to-household transmission – this means the virus is mostly being spread within the family unit and from one household to another. Restricting house-to-house contact will help stop the spread.

The new rules (which don't apply to schools) mean:

- You must not allow people you don't live with or who are not part of your support bubble into your home or garden.
- You must not visit people you do not live with or who are not part of your support bubble in their home or garden, in Wolverhampton or elsewhere.
- People can only come inside your home or garden for specific purposes set out in law (see the guidance for further details).

A support bubble is where a household with one adult joins with another household (on an exclusive basis). For more details of the new measures, please visit

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/restrictions.

As parents and carers you have a key role to play in helping to keep your school safe by preventing the spread of the virus.

So please do all you can to maintain social distancing when dropping off or picking up your children from school. Please arrive at your allocated time and don't wait around for any longer than you need to. Please also consider wearing a face covering when you're on the school run.

And please remind your children that, when they are in school, they should wash their hands more often, stay in their school bubble at all times and wear a face covering if required – the change to the rules from tomorrow mean that secondary school pupils, as well as staff and visitors, need to wear face coverings in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is hard, unless they are exempt from doing so for medical reasons.

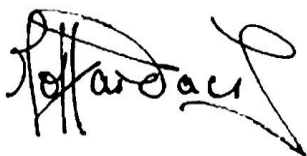
We will no doubt see more cases of Covid-19 in our schools, and when these do inevitably occur, please be assured that schools will be working closely with the City of Wolverhampton Council and Public Health England to manage them appropriately. It's really important that you support your school and follow any instructions you are given if this were to happen.

Schools are working hard to deliver normal lessons as well as organising remote learning for children and young people who are not able to attend school. Your school may already have written to you to explain how they will be reinstating remote learning if this is needed and this will differ from school to school.

Attendance is now mandatory once again, unless your child or someone in your family have symptoms of Covid-19. These include a fever, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell.

If you have any of these, you should self-isolate and book a test by calling 119 or visiting www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test. No-one in your family should attend school while you are self-isolating, but you should keep in contact with your school at this time. Only those with symptoms need to get a test, but everyone with symptoms needs to get a test, and all ages can be tested.

Stopping the spread of coronavirus will not only protect ourselves and our friends and family but also help keep more of our city's children in school. Please carry on doing all that you can to help.



Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills



Emma Bennett
Director of Children's Services