

Letter to Parents/Carers

Email: generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk

Date: 28 August 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Returning to School in September

Many parents and children will be especially anxious at the start of the school term this September. I want to reassure you that all agencies in Somerset are working together to make the return to school as safe and smooth as possible. You'll be aware that the expert medical advice is that the COVID-19 risks to children are very low.

Headteachers and their staff colleagues have been working tirelessly over the summer to get their schools ready for the start of the new year, ensuring that arrangements are in place so that children can return to school as safely as possible. If they haven't already done so, they will be contacting you to explain what the new arrangements are, in order to comply with Government guidance.

In addition to the information and practical guidance on the [gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool) website, Headteachers have produced a YouTube video 'See you in September' youtu.be/zicWPsq5GbU to re-assure children that everything is being done to ensure everyone is safe when schools re-open. There is additional advice available at www.healthysomerset.co.uk/covid-19/happy/cyp/

There are some important key messages:

- Please support your schools in all that they are trying to do. These are challenging times for everyone.
- The Government have recently changed their advice on face coverings www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education and therefore children in Year 7 and above must carry a face covering unless there are reasons as to why they not able to use one. Your School will advise on how face coverings are to be used in the school environment.

- If your child displays the symptoms of COVID-19 (high temperature, new and continuous cough and/or loss of taste or smell), then your child must not come to school. It is important that anyone with symptoms requests a test – this can be done through www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or by phoning 119.
- If your child receives a positive test result for Coronavirus then please notify the school as soon as possible. All household members (including brothers and sisters) must self-isolate for 14 days.
- If you are contacted by NHS Test and Trace and your family is advised to self-isolate, it is essential that you follow the advice and do not send your child/children to school for 14 days. This applies even if your child/children receive a negative test result as they could develop coronavirus after having the test. You can read more at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youve-been-in-contact-with-a-person-who-has-coronavirus/
- If you have just returned from a holiday and been advised to quarantine for 14 days please do and again, do not send your child/children to school until the quarantine period is over.
- If your child/children uses school transport please visit www.somerset.gov.uk/schooltransport for further information and guidance.
- If you or your child/children continue to have concerns about returning to school or school attendance, please do not hesitate to contact staff at the school for advice and support.

Attached a flow chart which sets out the processes that will be followed should there be concerns about COVID-19 amongst students.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope that your child/children enjoy their return to school.

Yours sincerely



Julian Wooster
Director of Children's Services

Enc: Flowchart