Calderdale Council
Town Hall
Crossley Street
Halifax
HX1 1UJ

28th May 2021

Dear parent/carer,

Thanks for your support over the last year in following guidance and helping prevent the spread of Covid-19. This has been an unprecedented time and our early years providers, schools and colleges have worked really hard to keep as many children in education as possible.

Over recent weeks, we've seen an easing of COVID-19 restrictions across the country. People can now meet indoors in groups of up to 6 or two households, and groups of up to 30 can meet outdoors. We may see a further easing of restrictions from 21st June.

For some people, this is welcome news. For others, it is a worrying step. Of course, we are all looking forward to a time when we can go about our lives without worrying about COVID-19.

Unfortunately, **COVID-19 rates in Calderdale are rising**, and are highest in secondary school and sixth form aged children. We have had a small number of cases of the new variant first identified in India in the borough and it's critical that we keep case rates low if we are to prevent further variants developing before the vaccine has been offered to all adults.

Following the **"five big things"** will help to reduce the opportunity for new variants to develop and spread. We should all:

1. Keep our distance and limit mixing with people we don't live with
2. Meet others outside where possible, and if not then let the fresh air in
3. Wear a face covering indoors where possible, unless medically exempt
4. Self-isolate with symptoms, if we test positive or if we are a contact of someone who has tested positive
5. Book the vaccine when we are invited by the NHS

For now, COVID-19 guidance for schools and early years settings remains unchanged. Settings must keep group sizes small and avoid mixing between groups or "bubbles", and we advise that face coverings continue to be worn as before.

The more we can all do to stop the spread of the virus, the safer everyone will be and the less disruption there will be to your child's education and to all our lives.

Please continue to help us to keep our schools and early years settings safe. Keep your distance from other parents/carers at drop-off and pick up; where a face covering if you can; and please do stay at home if you or anyone in your household has symptoms, or if you are instructed to do so by Test and Trace.

When a child who could have COVID-19 attends school, it doesn't just pose a risk to others in school, but also leads to bubble closures and children and staff having to self-isolate.

Please do keep your child at home if they – or anyone in your household - has any symptoms of COVID-19:

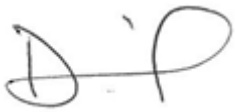
- a high temperature
- a new and continuous cough
- a loss or change to the sense of smell or taste

Anyone with any of these symptoms must arrange a PCR test, either at a local test site or by ordering a test online. You can arrange testing here: www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test, or by calling 119. **Do not rely on the results of LFD home test kits** (the type you can get from the pharmacy) **for anyone with symptoms** because they are not reliable at detecting Covid-19 in people with symptoms.

Schools, the college and early years settings within Calderdale continue to work closely with us to keep children and staff safe. Please support them in doing this. Remember, they are working on public health advice.

If you or your child have any concerns about COVID-19, contact the Healthy Futures Calderdale school nursing team by phone on **0303 330 9974** or by text on **07480 635297 (young people)** or **07507 332157 (parents/carers)**.

Kind regards,





Deborah Harkins
Director of Public Health

Julie Jenkins
Director of Children and
Young People's Services

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE