



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: Secondary Heads

People's Services Department

Atlas House
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St Helens
Merseyside
WA10 1LD

08 September 2020

Contact: Joanne Davies
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Our ref: 07.09SET/JD/SF
Your ref:

Dear Parent/Carer,

From September 2020, it is the government's plan that all children and young people, in all year groups, will return to school and college.

The safe reopening of schools is a very important step for our community, but particularly for our children and young people. It is vital that children and young people return to school and college- for their educational progress, for their well-being, and for their wider development. The government guidance is very clear in their expectation that school attendance will once again be mandatory , with the exception of a small number of students who remain under the care of a specialist health professional and are unable to attend school because they are complying with clinical or public health advice. For parents and carers of children and young people of compulsory school age, this means that the legal duty on you as a parent to send your child to school will apply.

We understand that this is still a worrying time. In recognition of this we have set up a St Helens council website - <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/backtoschool> - which provides helpful information and regular updates on the reopening of schools. However we thought it would be useful to share with you some basic information about the infection control and prevention measures being used. These measures are based on the comprehensive risk assessments that each educational setting has undertaken.

Schools in St Helens have remained open during the pandemic to provide support for vulnerable children and children of key workers, so these measures have already been in place for a period of time. We will continue to work with schools and colleges throughout the year in order to reduce any risks however we have encouraged the basic protection measures as follows:



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- Staggering start and finish times to help to maintain social distancing
- Changing the layout of school classrooms to help maintain social distancing
- Implementing good ventilation in classrooms by opening windows and doors
- Enhanced cleaning regimes
- Providing the opportunity for regular handwashing or hand sanitising throughout the school day
- Establishing class and year group bubbles
- Encouraging staff and pupils to carry a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes (and then putting the tissue in the bin)
- Ensuring children and young people wearing a face covering on public transport
- Encouraging children and young people to walk or cycle to school if they can.
- Supporting pupils and staff who have symptoms or a positive test to self-isolate

Whilst we cannot completely eradicate the risk of COVID-19 in schools, by working together we can help to reduce the risk. We look forward to working alongside you this term to ensure that children and young people come back to school safely and enjoy those experiences which so benefit their education, health and social emotional wellbeing.

Kind regards

Jo Davies,
Assistant Director,
Education, Early Help and Children's Health

Sue Forster
Director of Public Health
People's Services, St Helens Council