



Dear Parents and Carers

COVID-19 cases in parts of Central Bedfordshire have been rising rapidly in the last two weeks

As many as 1 in 3 people who have coronavirus have no symptoms and could be spreading it without realising it.

We all have a part to play in controlling the virus. With the school holidays and festive season upon us, it is tempting to not stick to the rules. However, it is more important than ever that we continue to:

- Social distance from anyone we don't live with
- Wash our hands regularly
- Wear a face covering
- Self-isolate if you have symptoms, test positive or are contacted by Test and Trace and asked to isolate

Mixing with other people increases the risk of spreading the virus. Whilst for most young people they only experience mild symptoms of the virus they can pass it on to others who may have underlying conditions or be elderly who are much more likely to be very ill from the virus. This is why it is vitally important that young people limit their social contact with others. We are seeing increasing hospital admissions and significant pressure on our hospitals already. Sadly people are dying in our area every week.

In school, bubbles are formed so that the virus can be contained if someone tests positive. If your child is no longer attending school, they can no longer mix with students who were in their school bubble. They must only have close contact with people they live with or who are in their support bubble.

Like a lot of families, you are planning for the festive season and we urge you and your family to think carefully about your plans. Whilst the restrictions have been relaxed to enable people to meet with up to three household bubbles indoors between 23-27 December this does not come without risk. We want everyone to stay safe over Christmas and that means planning for a different Christmas this year. We have lots of advice and ideas to help you do this on Central Bedfordshire's website:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/alternative-covid-christmas>

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/covid-christmas-advice>

Please continue to help us keep the virus under control. We can only do this if everyone plays their part.

Vaccinations have begun and there is hope that 2021 will see us all return to some normality but for now, we have to keep up with the efforts to control the virus so that we can protect everyone in our community, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Yours sincerely

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