

COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Director: John Morgan



Public Health
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Dear Parents and Carers,

COVID-19 Update for the New Year

Thank you for everything you have done over the last year to help keep your family and community safe from COVID-19. I am writing to ask for your continued help in keeping us all safe in the New Year and advise on what you can do as parents and carers to enable your children to continue to attend their nursery/school/college safely.

It's been a really challenging start to the term for our pupils, parents and schools in terms of high levels of Covid-19 infection in children and young people. Whilst some national restrictions have been eased from Thursday 27th January and the overall rate of Covid-19 infection is declining, case rates continue to be high in school aged children especially in the primary age group. The Department of Education has prioritised face to face education for children and young people and we will continue to work with schools to ensure that early year settings, schools and colleges remain safe. Here is a reminder of things you can do to keep our children and young people safe (in addition to good hygiene measures):

Do regular Lateral Flow Testing (LFTs) at home

- Secondary school pupils should do twice weekly LFTs and report the result online: [Report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/report-a-covid-19-rapid-lateral-flow-test-result)
- If your child over 5 years is a close contact, do daily LFT for 7 days, preferably first thing in the morning

Take up the offer of vaccination for eligible children

- 12-15 year olds are due their second doses now – they can still have their first one if they haven't already. Your child get their jab either by walking into a local clinic or by booking via the national booking system: [COVID-19 vaccinations | Merton Council](#)
- If you have a child aged 5-11 years who is in the high risk category, you should be contacted by your child's GP/specialist about getting the vaccination.

If you are a parent/carer and have not managed to get vaccinated yet, the offer for first, second and booster doses remain open

- Call NHS 119 number if you have questions or need help with coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations, testing, NHS COVID Pass, and more – or just walk into any of our clinics.
- You can get your jab either by walking into a local clinic or booking via the national booking system [COVID-19 vaccinations | Merton Council](#)

Support your child's nursery/school/college during outbreaks

- Many schools and settings currently have outbreaks and may adopt additional measures, such as mask wearing, based on the public health guidance and advice, please support schools when they are implementing measures to protect the school community.
- Please note face masks are still strongly recommended when there is an outbreak in nurseries/schools/college, on some public transport, dedicated school transport and crowded/enclosed spaces.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our schools for their huge efforts in keeping our schools going during these exceptional times. Huge thanks to parents and children and young people for doing your part in keeping yourselves and others in Merton safe.

Yours sincerely



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