

Date: 3 March 2021



Children & Young People
Oldham Council, Civic Centre, Level 3,
West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UT

Dear Parents and Carers

As you know, it is the government's plan that all children and young people, in all year groups, will return to education full-time from Monday 8th March. Our early years settings colleges and schools in Oldham are delighted to be welcoming them back. It is vital that our children and young people return to school and college, for their educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development.

The Chief Medical Officers from all four nations in the United Kingdom have made it clear that the overall risks to children from coronavirus (COVID-19) in relation to education settings is low and that the risks associated with not being in school certainly outweigh those of being in school. We want to take this opportunity to tell you of the measures we have taken in Oldham to ensure that your children can return to education safely and how you can help us achieve this.

Oldham has seen the rates of COVID reducing since the start of lockdown in January. This has been due to the efforts of all residents in following the restrictions. All educational establishments have worked really hard to ensure that they are safe for pupils and staff. This includes support for hand washing, environmental cleaning and social distancing.

We now need to ask you for more and to play your part as we begin the wider reopening of schools from Monday 8th March.

I am sure you will agree that regular school attendance is essential for the educational, social and personal development of children and young people. As such school attendance will be mandatory for all pupils from Monday 8th March. For primary schools this will mean pupils back in the classroom.

To support the wider reopening, staff in all schools are being offered rapid testing for COVID twice a week to ensure that any cases are picked up quickly.

Additionally, Oldham Council has put in place a process to support schools in dealing with any suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus in educational settings.

If you have concerns about your child returning to school because you consider they may have specific risk factors, you should discuss these with your education setting. They will be able to explain the actions being taken to reduce risks.

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that staff and children remain safe whilst they are in an education setting.

We would be grateful if you could play your part by:

- Not sending your child to their nursery, childminder or school if they are showing coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or someone in their household is showing symptoms.
- Arranging a test if you or your child develops symptoms and inform your nursery, childminder, school or college of the results (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>)
- If the test is positive, follow guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>)
- Not congregating around the entrance or exit if you are dropping-off or picking-up your child at the start and end of each day. Please maintain a safe social distance from others during these periods.
- Following the national guidance on coronavirus, including regular hand washing, social distancing, use of face coverings and limiting the contact you have with people outside of your household.

It is really important that you help nurseries, childminders, schools and colleges to implement these actions by following the advice set out in this note.

I know the vast majority of children and young people will be pleased and excited to return to school. We are committed to doing everything we can to make that return safe and successful. If you have any questions or queries from this note please get in touch so we can support you to achieve this in every way we can.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,



Gerard Jones
Managing Director of Children &
Young People



Katrina Stephens
Director of Public Health