

Date 16 July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

This letter provides some guidance to parents, carers, children, schools and settings, reflecting the change in the Government's roadmap to ease COVID restrictions. It covers arrangements for:

- the use of bubbles in schools
- contact tracing and isolation in the last week of term (19 July – 23 July).

It remains our priority during this time to minimise the disruption to learning for children and young people whilst also reducing transmission of COVID.

As you'll be aware, the DfE have now set out their guidance for schools from Step 4 onwards. It is available on [their website](#).

This guidance sets out changes to controls for education settings to balance the need to minimise virus transmission with maintaining stability of education. The main changes are:

- the removal of the requirement for schools to teach in bubbles (from 19th July)
- contact tracing will be carried out by NHS Test and Trace from Monday 19th July, so educational settings will no longer be responsible for this.

In line with national trends, rates of COVID 19 are rising in East Sussex. We understand therefore that schools and settings may wish to retain their current arrangements both in relation to the use of bubbles and contact tracing until the end of term on 23 July. We support any school or early years setting wishing to do this.

This approach is also supported by the DfE who have provided template letters to help schools communicate with parents/carers in these circumstances. The letters advise that where a child has been in close contact with an individual who has had a positive test result for coronavirus (COVID-19) they must not attend school for the following 10 day period to prevent avoidable spread within the school.

The need to isolate and take a PCR test if you are symptomatic is key to reducing transmission. The guidance now recommends that all close contacts of a positive case also take a PCR test in addition to self isolating. Testing sites are available at a number of locations across East Sussex.

Thank you to you and your families for your continued support and understanding at what we know is still a challenging time.

Yours sincerely



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Director of Children's Services



Darrell Gale FFPH
Director of Public Health