



Head Office - Switch House, Suite B2, First Floor, North
Perimeter Road, Bootle, L30 7PT

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www.progress-schools.co.uk

0151 559 1867



05th November 2020

Dear parent/carer

Re: National lockdown and our schools

On the evening of 5th November, the Department for Education (DfE) released new guidance to all schools based on the new national lockdown measurements that have begun and will remain in place until 11.59pm on Wednesday 2nd December.

With the decision to move back into a national lockdown, we are conscious that some students, parents and carers may have concerns. We hope that the contents of this letter addresses any concerns/queries you may have. If it does not, please do not hesitate to contact anyone at Progress Schools who will be more than happy to help.

Attendance

All schools continue to remain open for all children and young people as they have since the start of the autumn term for the duration of the national restrictions. It remains very important for children and young people to attend, to support their wellbeing and education and help working parents and guardians. Senior clinicians still advise that school is the best place for children to be, and so they should continue to go to school. Schools have implemented a range of protective measures to make them safe.

As stated by the Department for Education, being at school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing. Time spent out of school is detrimental for children's cognitive and academic development, particularly for disadvantaged children. This impact can affect both current levels of education, and children's future ability to learn. It continues to be our aim that all pupils, in all year groups, remain in school full-time.

The DfE and Public Health England have reiterated that the risk to children themselves of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low and there are negative health impacts of being out of school. For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in

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the classroom far outweigh the low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) and schools can take action to reduce risks still further.

Confirmed Cases

Where we have a positive COVID case in any school site, each site will be considered as one 'bubble' in its own right due to their relatively small size in comparison to mainstream schools. Therefore, the 'bubble' will be asked to isolate for 14 days and must be educated remotely.

If this happens in your child's school, you will receive a separate letter explaining what to do, when your child can return to school, what it means for your family and where to access support.

Minimising Risk

Progress Schools are committed to reducing transmission of the virus. We have enhanced risk assessments in each of our schools which set out the controls we have in place, in line with DfE guidance. We have increased cleaning and sanitising of all areas and reduced numbers of people allowed in certain rooms. We also ensure all rooms are well ventilated and anyone over the aged of 16 is asked to use the NHS Test and Trace app to 'check in' at our schools.

In the event a school has to close due to a positive case, the school is deep cleaned before any student/staff member returns.

Face Coverings

New guidance has been issued to schools which says any students in year 7 and above should wear a face mask when moving around their school. In light of updated guidance, we will now ask that ALL staff and students wear a mask outside of classroom areas, unless eating lunch. Anyone who is exempt from wearing a mask will not be asked to do this and we ask others to be sensitive to individual needs.

No student will be removed from education for refusing to wear a face mask. However, to help us to play our part in reducing the transmission of the virus, we ask for your support in encouraging this so we can continue to educate our students with as little risk as possible.

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Transport

Children and young people aged 11 and over must wear a face covering on public transport. Face coverings should also be worn by pupils in year 7 and above when travelling on dedicated school transport to secondary school or college. This does not apply to those who are exempt.

What have we been doing within our schools?

At school, we have made series of adjustments to ensure that students are safe while they are in school. The main elements in our COVID restrictions are:

- Students are in Bubbles by year group
- Staff are wearing face shields when working with students in a distance of less than 1m.
- Students are asked to wear face masks when moving around school.
- Year groups have time outside at separate times of day.
- Each year group has a designated tutor and mentor.
- Students are not allowed to wander around the school and are asked to remain in their classroom and in their seats, apart from at specific times.
- Students have allocated desks, seats and equipment for them to use.
- Phones must be handed in and locked away until the end of the day.
- Temperatures are taken on arrival at school.

We ask that all students follow the rules that have been put in place not only for their own protection but also for the protection of staff and their families. If students are refusing to follow the COVID guidelines, the behaviour policy will be followed. Continually refusing to follow the guidelines will result in students being sent home or excluded.

We understand that some children and young people may be experiencing feelings such as anxiety, stress or low mood as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. We are working with our students in school every day around any concerns and will utilise support services if needed/requested.

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I would ask that you speak with your son/daughter and reinforce the reasoning behind the restrictions that we have put in place. We have not taken these measures because we want to; we have taken them because we have to.

Keeping students, ourselves and everyone's extended family safe is our main priority. I have enclosed a copy of the government regulations during this current lockdown. Can I please ask that students do not mix with people from outside of their bubble.

Finally please be reassured that Progress Schools in XXXXXXXX is as COVID safe as it possibly can be, and we will continue to follow government guidance and advice as we move forward through this current pandemic. This is a difficult time for us all where anxiety remains high. However, we are committed to continuing to provide the best education for our students in a nurturing, safe environment.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child attending education, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the team who will be more than happy to listen and help.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Madine'.

James Madine
Chief Executive Officer – Progress Schools

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