

Friday 15th January 2021

Dear parent/carer

To all parents and carers of pupils attending schools in North East Lincolnshire

As you will be aware, the Prime Minister announced on Monday 4th January that England would enter a further period of lockdown. For our local schools this means the following:

- Early years settings remain open to all
- Schools open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers
- Clear requirements for schools to provide high-quality remote education
- Continued provision of free school meals or food parcels for eligible pupils, whether or not they are attending school.

All education settings take their responsibilities to educate children and keep them safe seriously, and would much prefer to have all children in school learning face to face. It is only by working together that we can strike a balance to reduce numbers of contacts within our communities as well as ensuring that those children needing a place in school can access one.

All schools are different. Their buildings and layout, and the extent to which their staffing group has been affected all vary. There can be no standard template or standard decision about the number of pupils who can be accommodated. We do expect therefore that arrangements will be different in different schools. Headteachers in conjunction with their Chair of Governors, Multi Academy Trusts and for maintained schools the Local Authority to make decisions to ensure the health and safety of students and staff remains at the forefront.

We acknowledge that this is a very challenging time for all and we are writing to ask for your support in line with the current guidance:

We know that many of you are in families where both parents are involved in frontline work that takes you out of the home and where your work is essential in the fight against Covid-19. Where this is not the case, it would greatly help our schools and our local effort if those children stayed at home and accessed the schools remote learning offer.

Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can. Where you are a critical worker requesting a place for your child(ren), please be aware that this may not be a full-time place in order to reduce the number of children and staff attending the school.

Schools are expected to allow and strongly encourage vulnerable children and young people to attend. Parents/carers of vulnerable children and young people are strongly encouraged to take up the place.

If you do have any queries, I would encourage you to speak to your child's school in the first instance to calmly address the nature of your concern and to work together to find a solution.

Yours faithfully

Joanne Hewson
**Deputy Chief Executive/
Director of Children's Services**

Cllr Ian Lindley
Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People