

21 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you have all been keeping well since my last letter and that your children have settled back into school.

Firstly, I'd like to reassure you that we and all schools in Bracknell Forest are doing all we can to ensure children and staff are in a safe learning environment, this is our priority. All of our schools are following Public Health England and the Department for Education guidance at every stage to ensure the right steps are taken to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Where schools have seen a positive case(s), our Outbreak Control Plan has been followed and schools have reacted quickly and calmly to ensure the safety of all involved. Thank you to those who have been fully compliant and followed the measures in place.

You may be aware that there is a national shortage of COVID-19 tests. Demand for testing is increasing and priority is being given to areas of concern (those with more COVID-19 cases), which means areas with a lower number of cases (such as Bracknell Forest) are having less capacity.

In a bid to help reduce demand, the council is asking that only people with COVID-19 symptoms, or those who have been advised by an official organisation like the NHS or a local authority, apply for a test.

COVID-19 symptoms include:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of taste or smell

If your child or someone in your household develops one or more of the above symptoms, you will need to self-isolate and book a test as soon as possible. They will also need to fully engage with the NHS Test and Trace service when contacted. The effectiveness of the system relies on honest and clear details of close contacts, those who test positive will not get in trouble for the information they disclose, instead they will be helping to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

As you know, students should not attend school if they are displaying one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19. Please inform your child's school if you find yourself in this situation.

I'd like to reinforce the importance of following the government guidance at this time. In recent weeks we have seen an increase in positive test results amongst younger people in our borough. Please check how your children are socialising and continue to encourage compliance with social distancing measures. No one should be meeting up in groups of more than six people and everyone must continue to practise good hygiene. By washing hands frequently, keeping a safe distance from their friends and wearing a face covering where necessary, they are less likely to bring home coronavirus and potentially harm other, more vulnerable relatives.

Again, I would like to thank you for your continued support and hope you and your families stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely



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