

**Hackney Education**

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To all Parents and Carers  
Hackney Education Settings

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope your child's education has gone as well as possible this first half of Autumn term. We write to confirm information about Covid restrictions and measures at this time, in the light of London's move to Tier 2, the approaching half term and Halloween.

On Thursday last week, the government approved the London Mayor's request to move to Local COVID-19 Alert Level: High. This change came into effect at midnight on Friday 16 October 2020.

None of the three alert levels introduced by the government have direct implications on the operations of schools and colleges. Education settings in Hackney will remain open full-time to all students and pupils. Schools and colleges have successfully introduced measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. These preventative measures – such as keeping pupils in class or year group-sized bubbles, extra handwashing and phased starts – greatly reduce the risk of COVID-19 being transmitted.

In education settings that teach those in Year 7 and above, students and adults should now wear face coverings when moving around indoors, unless exempt from doing so. This requirement would apply in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. We have asked schools to review their risk assessments and to inform you of any changes they have introduced. Parents need to provide their child with a face covering and ensure they know how and when to wear it.



It is now more important than ever for young people, parents and families to consider their actions outside education settings. We must all follow the social contact restrictions that come with London's move to the High alert level.

Only one household / support bubble can mix inside - unless in a regulated setting like a school, nursery or with a registered childminder. Early years and childcare settings - including childminders, after-school clubs and nannies - can still be used under High alert level restrictions. Informal childcare (defined as unpaid and unregistered childcare) can be provided in private homes by people in your support bubble or your childcare bubble. A childcare bubble is where someone in one household provides childcare to a child aged 13 or under in another household. For any given childcare bubble, this must always be between the same two households. The full guidance on childcare in High alert level areas can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high#childcare](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-covid-alert-level-high#childcare).

In outside areas, the rule of six applies. It is crucial that young people and parents maintain a two-metre distance from others at the school gate during dropping-off and picking-up time. This cannot be stressed enough: you are highly unlikely to catch or spread COVID-19 through air-borne particles if you maintain this distance. We urge you to work with our education leaders to keep our settings, schools and colleges safe for staff, pupils and the wider community.

Those who can travel to school or college safely by walking, cycling or scooting are recommended to do so. Those able to wear face coverings must do so when travelling on home to school or public transport.

During half term, children are not allowed to visit each other in each other's homes. Children cannot have playdates or sleepovers in other houses. Formal childcare arrangements can continue if they are part of a bubble. Children can meet outside in groups of six or less and should maintain suitable distancing outside. Please ensure your child is aware of this.

As we approach Halloween and November 5th, we are confirming that parents should ensure children are not in a position to catch or spread the virus. Therefore knocking on doors, collecting items which may have been touched by others and gathering where groups may be larger than six should not happen.

You may ask why children and young people can mix with lots of other people in schools and colleges but not e.g. see their grandparents who live in other houses or flats. The reason is that as a country we are prioritising keeping education settings open, and in order to do this, we need to make difficult trade-offs elsewhere. Every contact avoided helps reduce the potential for the virus to spread, so your child not having contact with a relative outside their household becomes a really important action in reducing the reproduction rate (the 'R rate') of the virus. Closing schools would help, but is not something we would want to do because education has a major impact on children's long-term health, wellbeing and economic outcomes. Education is vital for your child. Closing schools would also impact severely on parents' ability to work and will only be implemented by the government as a last resort. Schools, colleges and other sectors are deemed COVID-secure places, with protective measures in place to reduce transmission. These measures are not required in household settings, nor could they be effectively enforced.

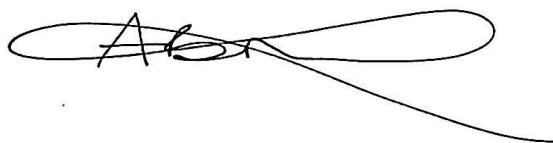
A reminder that if your child develops the following symptoms (a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of/change to sense of smell or taste), please make sure you get them tested and ensure the whole household self isolates at home until the result is received.

We know this is a challenging time. Thank you for your support for your school or setting and for each other. We wish you and your family well during this period.

Yours faithfully,



**Annie Gammon**  
Director of Education  
Hackney Education



**Cllr. Anntoinette Bramble**  
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for  
education, young people and children's  
social care



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