

Hackney Education
Hackney Council
1 Reading Lane
Hackney
London
E8 1GQ

To: All parents and carers with children
at Hackney maintained schools, free
schools and academies

30 December 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Covid-19 Actions for Schools

Thank you for your support through these difficult times to help us keep our schools open and we hope you have been able to enjoy Christmas with your family, friends and loved ones. We are keen to make sure all our schools and settings run as safely and effectively as possible during this period. Your support can help.

Cases of Covid-19 are now at their highest levels since the start of the pandemic, with the highly transmissible Omicron now the dominant variant. This is continuing to put essential services under significant pressure, due to staff across services being ill or needing to self isolate, and with increased care in hospitals for increased numbers of people with severe disease.

To help reduce the spread of the Covid-19 and to help schools maintain face to face learning onsite, we ask that you and your family support your school in implementing the following simple measures:

- **Undertake regular home / lateral flow testing**, all asymptomatic staff and pupils in year 7 and above should test using a Lateral Flow Device (LFD) / rapid test at least twice a week. Where possible and appropriate, we also ask that frequent testing across the whole household is undertaken.
- **Face coverings** - given that cases of COVID are now at their highest levels since the start of the pandemic, all staff and students (unless exempt) in year 7 and above **must wear face coverings** in communal areas, such as corridors. Face coverings must also be worn in secondary school / college classrooms by pupils or staff when they are moving around the room or when there is no direct impact on communication / learning (e.g., during silent reading, individual working). Visitors to the school must also wear face coverings when onsite.



- **Get vaccinated** - adults over 18, children & young people aged 12-17 can easily be vaccinated to protect themselves from serious illness, reduce transmission and protect the most vulnerable. Adults should also get a booster vaccination 3 months after their 2nd vaccination. NB: Young people aged 12-15 will require parental consent but can get vaccinated at either John Scott Health Centre or Bocking Street vaccination centre, with a second vaccination given so long as it is over 12 weeks since their first vaccination. See [Hackney's website](#) for more information.
- **Increased ventilation** - good ventilation reduces how much virus is in the air indoors. We are encouraging all schools and settings to ensure rooms are well ventilated by opening windows to increase the amount of fresh air in the room. This may mean some rooms are colder than usual over the winter period.
- **Reduce indoor gathering and mixing**, where possible, between year groups (e.g. virtual rather than whole school assemblies may be held).
- **Reduce interaction across class / year groups**, including at break and lunch times to reduce the risk of spreading the virus.
- **Promote social distancing** by staff and students when onsite.
- **Reduce the number of visitors onsite** - this may mean that schools will hold virtual meetings with you rather than meeting face to face.

We must all work together to stop the spread of the virus. Alongside the measure being implemented in school, you can also help by:

- **Wearing a face covering** at all times, including when you're on the school site, as well as in shops and on public transport.
- **Social distancing** - keep a sensible distance from others and avoid gathering at the school gates
- **Good hand hygiene** - encourage your family to keep their hands clean.
- **Test regularly** (at least twice a week) - see above. Take a PCR test if you develop any of the [Covid-19 symptoms](#). See [Hackney's website](#) for more information on how to get tested and where to get LFD tests from.
- **Self isolate** for seven days if your child or a household member tests positive. You can now end self isolation at day 7 following two negative LFD tests taken 24hrs apart. See the [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#). Please note that close contacts will be identified by NHS Test & Trace and your child's school will not send suspected contacts home.
- **Get vaccinated** - see above.

By taking these steps, you'll be making sure that you're doing everything you can to protect your own family and friends as well as supporting our schools to stay open and keep as many children & young people attending as possible.

Yours sincerely,





Cllr Anntoinette Bramble
Deputy Mayor

Annie Gammon
Director of Education

Dr Sandra Husbands
Director of Public Health