

COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Director: Hannah Doody



Public Health
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Direct Line: 0208 545 4834

Date: 15th June 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Increase in COVID-19 cases in Merton

Merton has seen a rise in the COVID-19 (coronavirus) case rate over the last few weeks. Within this rise, the greatest increase in case numbers in Merton has been in school age children and young adults, with an increase in outbreaks and cases in schools during the last two weeks. Data suggests that our rise may be linked to the national rise seen in the new 'Delta' variant (first identified in India). This variant of the COVID-19 virus is even more highly transmissible.

In light of the rise in cases and the National announcement pausing the further lifting of COVID restrictions by 4 weeks, to 19th July, I am writing to ask for your support in helping stop the continuing rise in COVID-19 cases in the borough:

Importance of twice weekly rapid LFD testing for school staff, secondary pupils and households:

- We are aware that around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms, so a test that rapidly detects these otherwise hidden cases is vital. Each positive case identified can help prevent many additional people becoming infected. I would reiterate the importance of conducting twice weekly LFD testing and urge all secondary pupils and parents to continue, register your results and inform the school as soon as possible if there is a positive result.
- Please see the videos for more information on [LFD testing](#), and [how to do it](#).
- Support is available for those testing positive who need to self-isolate from [Merton Community Hub](#)

Visitors

- We would like to remind all parents and visitors to the school site to wear face coverings and maintain strict social distancing rules.

Vaccination

- We would strongly urge anyone who is eligible for vaccination to take up the offer – currently this is open to those age 23 or over, and we are expecting this to open to people aged 18 or over in the near future. For all those people eligible for a vaccination, the offer remains 'evergreen' - it is not too late to book a vaccination, even if someone did not take up the offer before. You can book an appointment at a vaccination centre on the [NHS website](#).

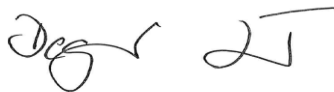
Alongside this advice it's really important that you and your household continue to follow all the guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Washing hands regularly, for 20 seconds
- Wearing a face covering in indoor spaces
- Keeping a safe distance from those not in your household or support bubble
- Maintaining a good flow of fresh air in indoor spaces by keeping doors and windows open.

It is important to control the spread of the virus so please do not send your child/children into school if they have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, have a positive lateral flow rapid test result or are unwell with a new cough, fever or loss of or change to sense of taste or smell. If you are in any doubt about symptoms please book a PCR Test on the [NHS website](#).

We would like to thank all school staff who are working very hard to ensure students stay safe and thank you for following COVID guidelines and your continued support in helping Keep Merton Safe.

Yours sincerely



Dr Dagmar Zeuner
Director of Public Health
Dagmar.Zeuner@merton.gov.uk