



Dear Parents and Carers

The latest available data shows increasing cases of Covid across the country.

For Halton the data shows that in the last 7 days to 4th January, there have been 1517 confirmed cases of Covid19 in the borough. This means that the current rate per 100k population is 1172/100,000 – or put more simply 1 in every 85 people in Halton currently have the virus.

Our infection rates are putting pressure on our NHS and health services and increasing the risk of ill-health for all of us and our families and friends. We all have a part to play in reducing the spread of the virus.

I am asking everyone to follow the ‘stay at home’ rule unless leaving home is permitted and to always follow the rules please.

You can see more information on how to keep safe, the current rules and support that is available at <https://hbcnewsroom.co.uk/coronaadvice/>

In addition, can I also ask you to support our Key/Critical Workers and help those who work in key sectors to continue to do so.

During this period of national lockdown primary, secondary schools and the college will only allow vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers to attend . Special schools and Alternative Provision can continue to offer face to face provision, where appropriate. All other pupils should **not** attend and should learn remotely until February half term.

It is important to remember that fewer children travelling to and attending schools lowers the spread of the virus and the infection of vulnerable individuals.

It's all happening IN HALTON

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The Government has been very clear in its guidance that the most important contribution you can make is that if you can keep your child at home safely you should.

Schools in Halton will continue to offer places for children who are vulnerable.

For critical/key workers we anticipate many of you will be able to keep your child at home and safely cared for and if you can safely and appropriately keep your child at home we would urge you to do so. There may also be partners who work from home or other non-elderly family members who could provide childcare support.

However, provision will be available for children whose parents are critical to the COVID19 response (key / critical workers), have to leave home to work and are unable to make alternative child care arrangements.

It is also important that you do not rely for childcare from those who are advised to be in higher risk categories such as grandparents, friends or family members with underlying conditions.

As a Parent/Carer I would also ask you to do everything you can to ensure children are not mixing socially either as we know this does spread the virus.

I must stress schools are only open to vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers for public health reasons and the provision we are putting in place is an emergency measure.

Please contact your school if you fall into the specific government defined categories and **cannot** make other childcare arrangements. I would ask you to remember that for the safety of everyone it is crucial we keep the numbers accessing school as low as possible. All schools are now equipped to provide remote learning opportunities for children and young people. Please support our school staff and each other by respecting the need for critical workers to have access to appropriate childcare at this time.

The Government has produced a range of guidance and support together with a list of who they have defined as critical workers and vulnerable children during this national lockdown. You can find this information online here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus/education-and-childcare>

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Finally, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to beat this virus.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Parr'.

David Parr OBE
Chief Executive

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