

Executive Member for Learning and Skills  
Director of Children and Families

7 January 2021

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

As you know, the country has entered a third lockdown and schools have closed for everyone except the children of critical workers and vulnerable children. The purpose of the lockdown is to reduce contact and therefore reduce the infection rate of Covid-19. Our message to you is clear: the best action for you to take for your child, yourself and the whole community is to keep your child at home if it is safe to do so.

We are at a critical situation in Leeds. The infection rate has increased again to 316 per 100,000, an increase of 64% on last week, and further increases are likely as the effect of the Christmas relaxations feeds through.

For some of you, we understand that your work is of critical importance that your child absolutely has to be in school. However, if you qualify as a critical worker, but can manage to have your children at home, please do this, and let your school know. Government guidance published on 7<sup>th</sup> January reinforces this point. It says "Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can."

Government guidance also says that there should be a place for all children of critical workers "who need to attend." We know that many of you are in families where both parents are involved in frontline work that takes you out of the house and where your work is essential in the fight against Covid-19. Where this is not the case, it would greatly help our schools and our local effort if those children stayed at home and accessed the school's remote learning offer.

This will help schools reduce potential transmission of Covid-19 by minimising the numbers on site and to ensure staff have the capacity to support the home learning of all other pupils. Each school will have undertaken a health and safety risk assessment and will know the maximum number of pupils they are able to have safely on site at any one time, given the amount of staff they have available.

Thank you for your understanding in what we recognise is a very difficult situation for everyone. We recognise that this will cause considerable disruption to your personal and working lives. Like you, we wish our children could be in school for the sake of their education and well-being. We really do appreciate the pressure this situation places on all of us but we are acting in the midst of a pandemic. We hope the progress with vaccinations means we can see a brighter future later in the year and so there is hopefully an end in sight.

Our best wishes to you all please stay safe.

Yours faithfully



Councillor Jonathan Pryor  
Executive Member for Learning and Skills



Saleem Tariq, OBE  
Director, Children and Families