

Open Letter to All Parent and Carers - from Surrey County Council's Director of Public Health and Director of Education and Lifelong Learning

31 March 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

We wanted to take the opportunity to update you as the Spring Term draws to a close and the government removes the remaining COVID-19 domestic restrictions.

In partnership with our schools and education settings, we remain fully committed to providing every child and young person with the best possible learning experience. The global pandemic is not yet over and we know that adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum and support will need to continue into the future to achieve the best wellbeing and learning outcomes for your child.

We are seeking your support and commitment with ensuring that your child attends their education setting regularly. Good attendance provides our children with access to the richness of the on-site curriculum and enrichment opportunities, the face-to-face attention of teachers and support staff, the enjoyment of social interactions with their friends, and where it is needed, additional and targeted learning and pastoral support. If you, or your child, are struggling with good attendance, we encourage you to reach out to your school/education setting.

Our education leaders are committed to continuing on-site learning for all our children and young people even though COVID-19 rates remain high across the county. We thank you for your continuing support and patience as our schools and education settings continue to respond to the challenge of COVID-19 cases; we know that some children and young people have continued to experience disruption due to COVID-19 related staff absences this term, regrettably, this may continue into the Summer Term if rates remain high and access to cover staff for teaching and learning continues to be limited in areas where demand is high.

Schools and education settings continue to do all they can to reduce infection transmission and there are steps you and your family can do to help us reduce the risk of catching and spreading COVID-19:

- **Take the opportunity during the holiday period to [get vaccinated](#) - this is available to everyone aged 12 and over (and some children aged 5 to 11)**
- **Let fresh air in if you are meeting others indoors, or alternatively meet up outside**
- **Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces**
- **Stay at home if you are unwell – avoid contact with others if you have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive.**
- **Wash your hands and following advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'**

We recognise that some families continue to face extreme pressures and challenges so we take this opportunity to reiterate our pledge to support you in any way we can.

Please speak to your school with any concerns or issues, otherwise you may find these resources helpful:

- For parents/ carers looking for support with issues related to parenting there is the Children and Family Health Surrey advice line, 01883 340 922, that provides support on all aspects of child health, development, and parenting.
- For those families that are facing financial difficulty , you can find out about support available [here](#)
- Information and services for young people in Surrey with special educational needs and disabilities, their families and professionals can be found on the [Surrey Local Offer website](#).
- If you have a concern about the development and/or learning needs of a child in Surrey, you can contact the Learners' Single Point of Access (L-SPA). It is open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, all year round (except Bank Holidays) on 0300 200 1015.

We also wish to take this opportunity to thank all our teachers and education staff for their continuing commitment to our children and young people through their delivery of learning opportunities, experiences and pastoral care in their school or education setting.

Again, we wish to especially thank you, our parents and carers, for your continued patience, kindness and support. We understand the anxiety that some parents/carers are feeling about the impact of the last two years on their child's learning. Please be assured that our education community is working hard to find a variety of considerate and creative ways to meet the needs of our children and young people.

On behalf of all those working in the education sector in Surrey, we wish you all an enjoyable, safe, and healthy Spring Holiday.



Ruth Hutchinson
Director of Public Health



Liz Mills
Director of Education and Lifelong Learning