

My ref: Parent Letter – November 2021
Date: 8th November 2021
Contact: Please contact your school
for more information



To parents/carers of pupils in
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
Schools and Colleges

Public Health Directorate
Education Directorate

Dear Parent / Carer,

You may have read in the media that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have been successful in their application to become an Enhanced Response Area (ERA) as a result of the high number of COVID-19 cases in both areas including in our education establishments.

The application was made due to the significant number of cases in schools, rising cases in the working age population, low vaccination rates in some areas and the increasing impact on the NHS and hospital admissions. It aims to bring down infection rates as well as speeding up vaccination coverage.,

Becoming an ERA means we will receive additional resources and implement new measures to tackle the pandemic. ERA status started on Monday (November 1) and lasts for at least five weeks. It has several implications for schools and school-aged children.

The leaders of both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council have said they will use ERA status to drive down recent rises in COVID-19 infection, and to protect vulnerable people, the NHS and other vital services as the winter months approach.

In particular, we have identified the following as key priorities for the additional support available as a result of ERA status:

- Target and accelerate the roll-out of vaccinations for 12 to 15-year-olds in key areas and in schools where infections are highest
- Accelerate booster vaccinations for vulnerable people who had their second vaccination more than six months ago
- Increase the vaccination rate in areas with the lowest uptake.

We will have further talks with the Department for Education about additional measures we can introduce in schools, but in the meantime official approval has been given to continue with the measures which were introduced in the run-up to half term until 10th December. These are:

- The wearing of face coverings for staff and secondary school students in communal areas, and primary schools to consider similar arrangements for their staff.
- Staff to socially distance and staff meetings to be virtual.

- All visitors to schools to wear face coverings in school buildings.
- All non-essential events where parents visit schools to be held virtually.
- The promotion and monitoring of twice-weekly LFT testing for staff and students in secondary schools and staff in primary schools. In exceptional cases, we may encourage parents of primary age children to access LFT tests for a short period of time.
- Where schools have an outbreak, we will increase the frequency of testing and consider introducing supervised on-site LFT testing for secondary school students.

You may also notice a Government-funded communications drive which is due to start soon:

- Recommending the wearing of face coverings in crowded and enclosed areas where people come into contact with others they do not usually meet
- Reminding people to get their vaccinations, test regularly and particularly before attending events, meet with others outside their households in well ventilated spaces and to wash hands regularly and thoroughly. (LFD tests can be ordered online [https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests.](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)) Anyone with symptoms should isolate and take a PCR test as soon as possible.

The vaccination programme for 12 to 15-year-olds is now well underway, offering vaccines via a school-based vaccination programme. However, parents can now book an appointment at a local vaccination site via the NHS booking service [Book or manage your coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#) or by phoning 119.

All 12 to 15-year-olds will currently only be offered one dose. Young people who are at higher risk from COVID-19 or who live with someone who has a weakened immune system may be offered a second dose – those who are eligible for a second dose will be contacted by their GP to arrange their appointments.

We are confident that you will continue to do all you can to protect yourselves and your children, and that you will support their schools in any additional measures they may take, as a way of controlling the spread of this virus.

Yours sincerely,



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Cambridgeshire County Council and
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