Dear Parents and Guardians

As we move into a new school year I wanted to let you know the about COVID-19 prevention arrangements for going back to school.

Children’s education has been severely disrupted during the course of the pandemic. In light of the successful roll out of vaccination, as schools return in September the government has stepped down some of the measures that reduced the COVID-19 spread, such as bubbles and facemasks. However, there will still be additional cleaning and ventilation in our schools in the new term and there are actions that you can take to support your school to keep your children safe.

If you have not yet had your COVID-19 vaccine, it is not too late. Please book your vaccination today at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/) or go to [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/grabajab](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/grabajab) to find a drop-in clinic. Remember, everyone aged 16 and over is now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination.

All students that attend a secondary school will be asked to do their first 2 lateral flow tests at school. This is so that students can learn good techniques so that when they test twice-weekly at home they will get accurate test results during the year.

It is really important that parents/guardians of primary school children and secondary school children themselves continue to take regular lateral flow tests. Testing twice a week will help protect you, your family and friends. Please visit the Herefordshire Council website [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-3/covid-19-testing](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-3/covid-19-testing) for details on how to book or collect a test. Alternatively, you can order one online at [www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](http://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests).

If your child has any of the COVID-19 symptoms, you must book a test online [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) and immediately isolate. Do not attend school whilst waiting for the result. Unless exempt, other members of your child’s household will also need to isolate.

If your child (or anyone in your family) tests positive for COVID-19, it is important to respond to NHS Test and Trace and provide details of close contacts. This will enable those that are required to self-isolate to do so quickly, and close contacts who are not required to self-isolate (e.g. because they are under the age of 18 and 6 months or fully vaccinated) to be informed and asked to get a PCR test as soon as possible.\*

Thank you for your continuing to play your part to keep Herefordshire safe.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rebecca Howell-Jones

Herefordshire’s Acting Director of Public Health

\* All contacts aged 5 years or older will be asked to get a PCR test as soon as possible. Contacts aged under 5 will be asked to get a PCR test only if a household contact of a person who has tested positive for coronavirus.