



4th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to thank you for the amazing work you have done during lockdown to support your children with their home learning or in carrying out your critical worker duties. We have done so well together to help to reduce the community spread of this dreadful virus and are now at the stage that we can once again welcome all of your children back into school.

In preparation for all children to return, our schools have done extensive risk assessments and have ensured that they have considered all the new information about the virus when preparing the classroom routines and the building for the children to use on their return.

The medical advice remains clear that the overall risk to children from COVID-19 by attending school is still very low, but that the risks associated with not being in school are much higher. Therefore, the safest and best place for your children to be is in school, where we have extensive infection control measures in place to keep them as safe as we can.

The major concern about the return is not about the children themselves but is the impact their return will have on community transmission, because of adult to adult contact outside the school gates. In order to keep you and your children safe we will be continuing with the staggered start and end of the day. We are continuing to ask that only one adult bring their child/ren in in order to minimise the number of people coming onto the school grounds. We will also continue to require all adults coming onto the school site to wear facemasks. Can I also remind you that the 2m social distancing requirement remains in force and that we are still not allowed to meet with others from outside our own household or 'support bubble' inside or outside until the next phase which is on the 12<sup>th</sup> April at the earliest. As we have all been in lockdown so long I know it will be tempting to stop and have a chat, but if you do so please retain the 2m social distancing requirement and I would recommend that you also wear facemasks. Remember, this is to keep you and others as safe as possible and to provide good role models for your children.

You will know that one in three people with COVID-19 have no symptoms and so they do not know that they are infectious. Over the past month all primary school staff have been provided with home testing kits which they use twice a week. This has been done at home and has been able to detect the COVID 19 infection in people who have no symptoms. This home testing has proved an excellent initiative and has enabled staff to isolate quickly and thus prevent transmission and reduce 'bubble' closures.

From this week the government has announced that all parents and household members of primary and secondary aged children are also able to have these home tests and I would strongly encourage you to do so. This will help you to keep your family safe and to keep community transmission low. You can order them on line for delivery to your home address or you can pick them up from a dedicated centre. Please find further details by following this

link: [Rapid lateral flow testing for households and bubbles of school pupils and staff - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) I am afraid that schools are not able to provide these for you.

We are all playing our part in keeping schools safe during the pandemic. We ask you to keep on encouraging your child to wash their hands regularly and to use tissues (or even their sleeve) to catch coughs and sneezes rather than their hands and put the tissue in the bin straight away. I also ask you to keep your children at home if they have any Coronavirus symptoms: a high temperature; a new continuous cough; or a loss of their sense of taste or smell or if anyone else in your household has these symptoms or tests positive. This is really important to keep infections out of the school and so keep your children and the wider community safe.

If you have any concerns about the return do contact your headteacher, and don't forget about the wonderful Care First website which is available to support you too and contains some useful information about preparing your child for return:

<https://www.carefirstlifestyle.co.uk/> Username: unicatp Password: wellbeing

The headteacher and staff are really looking forward to seeing your child back at school next week.

My very best wishes to you all.

Stay alert and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S M Samson

Chief Executive Officer

**University of Chichester Academy Trust**