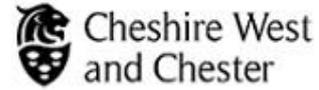


Cheshire West & Chester Council

Media Release



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Schools remain open during second national lockdown

During the second COVID-19 national lockdown schools, colleges, universities and early year settings across west Cheshire will remain open for children and students to continue their studies.

Education settings across the borough have worked incredibly hard to create a safe environment for students since reopening to all year groups at the beginning of September with robust infection prevention and control measures in place. Cheshire West and Chester Council will continue to provide advice and support for them to remain open as the second lockdown starts.

Ian Ashworth, Director of Public Health at the Council, said: "We understand that people will be worried at this time, and we would like to reassure families that all education providers in the borough continue to be supported by the Council's public health team when managing COVID-19.

"The test, trace and isolate system has been robustly implemented in all schools to quickly identify positive cases and close contacts. All schools have established systems in place to ensure that symptomatic and confirmed cases do not attend school and immediately self-isolate which is crucial for ensuring we prevent onward transmission of the virus.

"Schools have also received training in how to undertake contact tracing to ensure any close contacts are identified and advised to self-isolate as well. These measures are working well and are preventing large scale outbreaks across our schools, colleges and university."

As we've moved into tier two and, now into a full national lockdown, the following additional measures have been introduced in the borough's schools to help reduce the spread of the virus:

- All adults to wear a face covering when visiting or entering the school/early years premises including outdoor yard areas.
- Parents/carers to arrive and leave promptly when dropping off/collecting their child.
- In schools/early year settings where it has been agreed that a parent/carer can enter the school premises for drop-off and pick-up, only one adult should enter.
- All staff to wear face coverings when they come out of the building onto the playground during drop-off and pick-up times.
- Young people to avoid congregating outside school and mixing with other schools and should go directly home.
- Adults and pupils in Year 7 and above are required to wear a face covering in school communal areas.

Councillor Bob Cernik, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, said: "Children and young people have been through so much already this year and missed out on both learning and social contact when they've missed school. It is vital for the wellbeing of our young people that schools and other education settings remain open during the second lockdown, where possible.

"We will continue to be guided by the latest public health advice and I urge everyone to continue to play their part and follow the measures set out by your school or college to help reduce the spread of the virus and protect our communities."

For more information about the new national lockdown visit:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/covidrestrictions.