



Date: 16th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer/Guardian

Contact Tracing of Positive COVID-19 Cases Within Education Settings

From Monday 19th July 2021, the Government has advised that close contacts in schools will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and schools will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

However, I am asking all South Tyneside schools, working with the Public Health Team, to continue to undertake close contact tracing of positive cases within the school until the end of this term. If your child's school contacts, you to tell you that your child has been in close contact with a positive person in the school then your child will be required to self-isolate and you will receive a letter to this effect.

I have not taken this decision lightly. I want to keep all children, staff and the wider community of South Tyneside as safe as possible leading into the summer break.

The infection rate in South Tyneside now is extremely high and increasing every day. The number of people being admitted to hospital is also increasing.

Schools in South Tyneside will also continue with the current protective measures that have been operating, as outlined in their risk assessments, until the end of the summer term (e.g. bubbles, limited visitors, staggered entry/departure times, staggered lunchtimes, increased cleaning etc). This will help to minimise the impact to schools and allow them to stay open until the end of term.

With one week left of term for most schools, it is important that we continue to reduce risk and manage positive cases and close contacts of positive cases in our schools in the same manner we have done up until now.

Please note that from 23rd July 2021 NHS Test and Trace will work with either the positive case – or in the case of children – the parents, carers or guardians of the positive case to identify close contacts.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Tom Hall
Director of Public Health