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Date: 03 January 2021

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Dear Parent, Staff Member

Returning to Primary School and the Coronavirus Position in York

We are writing to you to outline the local position here in York, setting out our local rates and news about school re-opening.

Over the last few weeks, and through the Christmas period, we have seen an increase in the number of infections of Covid-19 (Coronavirus) across all age groups. The overall rate for York for the seven days ending on 29th December 2020 is 390.9 per 100,000 population. This contributed to York being put in tier 3 or very high in the Government's restriction levels from 31 December 2021.

It is reasonable to assume that at least a proportion of this increase in infection rates is due to the new variant of the virus.

We understand the concerns of parents and school staff but there is no public health evidence to suggest that primary schools in York should not fully re-open at this time. The new variant of the virus does appear to be more easily transmitted in primary school aged children but there is no evidence to suggest that it is making them any sicker.

The measures that schools have had in place throughout the pandemic in York will continue to be effective so primary schools in York continue to be safe places for staff and students with low levels of risk.

So on the basis of our local rates of Covid-19 in primary school aged children the public health advice is that there is confidence that schools can re-open for children if they are able to do so with consideration that their Covid-19 risk assessments have been updated since last term ended, including any new Government guidance and advice and they have sufficient staff available.

Your school will have been in touch with you already to update you on the arrangements for your school reopening.

Secondary schools have made their own arrangements for the start of the new term.

We hope you find this information useful in that it sets out that we are both confident that schools can reopen and are as safe as they can be working within the national Coronavirus restrictions and guidance.

Yours sincerely



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Corporate Director:
People



Sharon Stoltz
Director: Public Health