



**People's Services
Department
Education Welfare Service**
Atlas House
2nd Floor
2 Corporation Street
St Helens
WA9 1LD
Contact Number: 01744
673356

Dear Parent/Carer,

In March when the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was increasing, the government decided that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school.

The government has now issued guidance stating that it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development.

Your child missing out on more time in the classroom risks them falling further behind. From the beginning of the autumn term school attendance will therefore become mandatory.

This means for you as parents and carers that the following rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- Parents/carers duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age.
- Schools will become responsible to record attendance and follow up absence.
- The Local Authority have availability to issue sanctions (were appropriate) including the use of fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct.

In St Helens the Local Authority have worked very closely with our schools to ensure that at the start of the new term we work together to secure attendance of all pupils, help pupils to catch up on missed education, and enjoy being at school.

A small number of pupils will still be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves, or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus (COVID-19). If your child is unable to attend school or college for this reason, you should talk to your school or college about what support is in place in terms of remote education.

Shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 1 August, subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means, that the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.



The Local Authority are aware that you may be worried about your child returning to school, and we can confirm that we have all supported each other and have worked hard to welcome everyone back into a safe learning environment. If you are concerned please speak to your child's school or the Education Welfare Service about your worries, our contact details are at the top of this letter.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school in September.

Yours sincerely

Education Welfare Service