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Date: 4th March 2021

Dear parent/carer

We hope you are staying safe and well.

As you know, schools around the country can start to fully re-open next week following the latest government advice. Many children have continued attending school, either because they are classed as vulnerable or because they are the children of critical workers. Our schools have done amazing work in supporting these children whilst also providing remote learning. However, we hope you agree that it's very welcome for all pupils to be back in school.

We know your school will be contacting you direct with the details of how they are bringing back children. They will be providing information on things like safety measures, bubbles and staggered returns. There is flexibility for schools to bring back children in the way that suits their circumstances the best. As ever, we are supporting our schools in this work.

Schools with secondary-age pupils are also being asked by the government to start testing pupils for Coronavirus from next week. This is a huge task for any school and, as a local authority, we are supporting them on how to do this safely and effectively.

The government are giving the option for all secondary-age pupils to be tested (with parental consent), which would happen in school at first. The testing would then become home-based and we are waiting for further details of how this might happen.

Safety remains paramount and, at such a challenging time, we encourage you to support your school as much as possible. This might include, for example, helping your child to understand the rules they will need to follow. We would also remind you that school attendance is not only vital for education and wellbeing, it is also compulsory under government guidelines.

We know there will be children who find it difficult to return to school after another long period away. Please be assured that those children will be supported back into their school routine.

Of course, we must all continue following national guidelines and play our part in the fight against Coronavirus. Please remember that children should not attend school if they, or a member of their household, are showing any symptoms of Covid-19 or have tested positive. The main symptoms are: a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. If your child has to self-isolate, they should remain at home throughout this period.

Next week's full re-openings are a big step forward for thousands of children and young people in Kirklees. Please be assured we will continue working with our schools with the very best interests of pupils, staff and families at the heart of everything we do.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Niniennet Kendrick". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Cllr Viv Kendrick
Cabinet Member for Children's Services

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mel Meggs". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Mel Meggs
Strategic Director for Children's Services