



Date: 10 June 2020

Dear Headteacher

Here is my latest weekly update to you regarding the current picture in Doncaster and how this will impact on your school's wider reopening plans.

As I outlined in previous letters, we are still monitoring the national bioalert level as one of our key guidelines. The current level remains at 4 which indicates that a COVID-19 epidemic is in general circulation and that there is high transmission. However, I was expecting the Joint Biosecurity Centre to be up and running by now in order to help the national review of that alert level, unfortunately there appears to have been a delay in this process which means that we need to exercise a degree of caution when considering the current level.

From a local perspective, I can confirm that both the number of new hospital admissions from COVID-19 and the number of deaths from COVID-19 have fallen to pre-lockdown levels, which is very encouraging.

I can also confirm that as I outlined last week, the launch of the new track and trace system means that I am now starting to get a better understanding of the number of new cases at a local level, including where and when any potential issues may be occurring.

What the data currently shows is that there does seem to be a discrepancy between the number of new cases we would be expecting to see at this stage across Doncaster versus the number of actual new cases we are seeing via the various testing mechanisms that are now available. What this means is that the number of actual cases are higher than our previous predictions but this may be an artefact of the way these cases are reported. To give you a flavour, we have had 104 reported cases in the past week.

I am having regular discussions with Public Health England and have established a local COVID Control Board which will lead on managing any potential outbreaks across Doncaster. I know that you have also been working hard on your own risk assessments and outbreak plans which will be vital to supporting the work of this Board.

Doncaster Council

Civic Office, Waterdale, DN1 3BU

In summary, although we are not out of the woods, the risk of COVID-19 in Doncaster has reduced enough for us to manage it in a way that will allow us to start re-opening schools to the identified cohorts of Reception, Year 1, Year 6, Year 10 and Year 12 in a measured and cautious way.

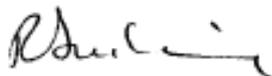
I would ask you to review your risk assessments against the situation I have outlined above before making your decisions about what to do next. I understand the plans to reopen will vary from school to school but I would recommend against simply reopening to all of the outlined year groups at once. A phased approach to help with mitigating risk would be my suggested option.

I will continue to share with you the updates on the current situation in Doncaster, and as part of our outbreak control plans will obviously share any relevant data we receive with you immediately.

I thank you for your continued support and commitment to a Doncaster-specific approach.

Kind regards,

Dr Rupert Suckling

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Suckling', written in a cursive style.

Director of Public Health Doncaster