

Our address:  
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Bexley Heath DA6 7AT  
Barking, IG11 7LU  
Website: <https://www.bexley.gov.uk>

**14 May 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I thank you for all that you are doing to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in our borough. As the National Roadmap is taken forward, Bexley is in a good place as we have operated in a COVID-19 secure way even when restrictions are gradually lifting.

We want to do all that we can to 'Keep Bexley Safe' as over the coming weeks we start to have more opportunities to see our friends and family and cautiously do some of those things we have been greatly missing.

For us to keep moving forward, the easing of restrictions needs to continue at a safe and careful pace and your patience and understanding is important. I appreciate all that you are doing and the support which you are giving to your child's school. This is making a huge difference and your actions are really helping to see our case levels fall.

However, it's important that your child's school and early years setting continues to take steps to reduce COVID-19 transmission and this requires them to continue to operate with various COVID-19 measures in place. This is because:

- Whilst COVID-19 case rates are reducing across the city we still have the difficult balance of easing some restrictions, keeping transmission of COVID-19 low and protecting everyone from what continues to be a dangerous virus.
- We are getting as many people vaccinated as possible and this is progressing well in Bexley in line with the national criteria for vaccination. However, we know that children and young people are not vaccinated. Also, most parents/carers at this time who are under the age of 40 years will not yet be vaccinated.
- Alongside this the threat of new variants which spread more easily, and this is also true in London.

Removing restrictions too quickly across an unvaccinated group could risk case rates going up quickly with a likely impact on schools. In the London Borough of Bexley, we aim to respond rapidly to cases of the variants first identified in India, Brazil and South Africa, which have been detected across the capital. In a city of London's size, population density, mobility and

international travel links, variants are likely to be part of how we live with COVID-19, so it's key that we adapt and respond to the changing nature of the virus in a way that works for our residents and our schools.

**Please continue to support the arrangements that schools have in place to reduce infection levels including wearing face covering, and it would be really appreciated if you as parents and carers continue to set the example by using face covering while bringing your child to school and picking them up at the end of the day.**

It's important to remember that the virus has not gone away. There are many tools to keep all of us safe from COVID-19 – regular free testing, effective vaccines, practising the simple but powerful prevention measures of good ventilation – space – face – hands and fresh air, and following the current restrictions in place. You can make a big difference with little extra care.

For further local information about COVID-19 please see the Council website microsite:

<https://www.bexley.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

With thanks and best wishes

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anjan Ghosh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Dr. Anjan Ghosh**

Director of Public Health  
London Borough of Bexley