



Church House
St John's Terrace
North Shields
Tyne and Wear
NE29 6HS

Telephone: 0191 2704163

Website: www.durhamnewcastledlt.co.uk

Dear Parents/ Carers

Firstly, we would like to thank the vast majority of you for your support during the last week since the national restrictions were announced, it has been an incredibly difficult and challenging time for all of our staff as we adjust to the partial closure of schools again. As you know, we have urgently been seeking to reduce risks to staff and children in school through revision of risk assessments whilst also ensuring we continue to teach those children in school and offer quality remote education to those children not in school. Sadly, whilst I know most of you are staying at home it has been brought to our attention that not all of our parents and carers are following the government guidance for lockdown. This particularly relates to the rules around social distancing, visiting households and mixing with those who are not within their immediate household bubble or childcare bubble at the weekend and on an evening.

As highlighted above I am sure that you are aware that this is a very difficult time for us, particularly our staff who are trying to play their part in the national effort and keep our school safely open for our vulnerable children and for Critical Workers who have no other childcare possibilities.

National lockdown has been imposed to prevent the transmission of the virus and to stop the NHS from being overwhelmed. Disregard for the guidance, even by a minority of families, is not only a law -breaking offence, but is also putting staff, pupils and other families at a heightened risk of being exposed to the virus within our school setting.

Unfortunately, in the current exceptional circumstances we must ensure we take all steps to ensure risks to our children and staff in school are controlled as far as possible and with this in mind we may be left with no choice but to request that children self-isolate if we are led to believe parents/ carers are not following government guidance due to the risk to others within school. We will also make the relevant local body aware of the breach.

The latest guidance can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

The main points are attached as an appendix.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Rickeard".

Paul Rickeard
Chief Executive Officer
Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust

The latest guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

Below is advice taken directly from the guidance:

You should follow this guidance immediately. This is [the law](#).

Leaving home

You must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary. You may leave the home to:

- shop for basic necessities, for you or a vulnerable person
- go to work, or provide voluntary or charitable services, if you cannot reasonably do so from home
- exercise with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, this should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.
- meet your [support bubble](#) or [childcare bubble](#) where necessary, but only if you are legally permitted to form one
- seek medical assistance or avoid injury, illness or risk of harm (including domestic abuse)
- attend education or childcare - for those eligible

Meeting others and care

You can leave home:

- to visit people in your [support bubble](#) (if you are legally permitted to form one)
- to provide informal childcare for children under 14 as part of a [childcare bubble](#) (for example, to enable parents to work, not to enable social contact between adults)
- to provide care for disabled or vulnerable people
- to provide emergency assistance
- to attend a support group (of up to 15 people)
- for respite care where that care is being provided to a vulnerable person or a person with a disability, or is a short break in respect of a looked-after child.

Exercise

You can continue to exercise alone, with one other person or with your household or support bubble. This should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area. You should maintain [social distancing](#). See [exercising](#).

Exercising

You should minimise time spent outside your home, but you can leave your home to exercise. This should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.

You can exercise in a public outdoor place:

- by yourself
- with the people you live with
- with your support bubble (if you are legally permitted to form one)
- in a childcare bubble where providing childcare
- or, when on your own, with 1 person from another household

This includes but is not limited to running, cycling, walking, and swimming. Personal training can continue one-on-one unless everyone is within the same household or support bubble.

Support and childcare bubbles

You have to meet certain eligibility rules to form a support or childcare bubble. This means not everyone will be able to form a bubble.

A [support bubble](#) is a support network which links two households. You can form a support bubble with another household of any size only if you meet the [eligibility rules](#).

It is against the law to form a support bubble if you do not follow these rules.

You are permitted to leave your home to visit your support bubble (and to stay overnight with them). However, if you form a support bubble, it is best if this is with a household who live locally. This will help prevent the virus spreading from an area where more people are infected.

If you live in a household with anyone aged under 14, you can form a [childcare bubble](#). This allows friends or family from **one other household** to provide informal childcare.

You must not meet socially with your childcare bubble, and must avoid seeing members of your childcare and support bubbles at the same time.

There is separate guidance for [support bubbles](#) and [childcare bubbles](#).

What a support bubble is

A support bubble is a support network which links **2 households**. You have to meet certain eligibility rules to form a support bubble. This means not everyone will be able to form a support bubble.

Once you're in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as being in one 'household'. It means you can have close contact with the other household in your bubble as if they were members of your own household. This means you do not need to maintain social distance with people in your support bubble.

You should continue to follow [social distancing guidance](#) with people outside of your household or support bubble. This is critical to keeping you, your family and friends as safe as possible.

If you form a support bubble, it is best if this is with a household who live locally. This will help prevent the virus spreading from an area where more people are infected.

Who can make a support bubble

Not everybody can form a support bubble. However, on 2 December the rules changed to widen eligibility for forming one.

You can form a support bubble with another household of any size if:

- you live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- you are the only adult in your household who does not need continuous care as a result of a disability
- your household includes a child who is under the age of one or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- your household includes a child with a disability who requires continuous care and is under the age of 5, or was under that age on 2 December 2020
- you are aged 16 or 17 living with others of the same age and without any adults
- you are a single adult living with one or more children who are under the age of 18 or were under that age on 12 June 2020

You should not form a support bubble with a household that is part of another support bubble.

If you share custody of your child with someone you do not live with

If you share custody of a child with someone you do not live with, the child can move freely between both parents' households. You do not need to form a support bubble to do this.

You can form a support bubble if you are eligible.

How support bubbles relate to other types of bubble

A support bubble is different to a childcare bubble. Being in a support bubble does not stop you from forming a childcare bubble.

Childcare bubble

You might be able to form a childcare bubble to provide or receive childcare from one other household if you live with someone under the age of 14.

However, you must not meet socially with your childcare bubble, and must avoid seeing members of your childcare and support bubbles at the same time, unless otherwise permitted by gathering limits in your tier.