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**Melanie John-Ross, Executive Director  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

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To:  
All Parents & Carers of Barnsley School  
Children

Date: 23 March 2021  
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Dear Parents and Carers

As the Director of Children's Services in Barnsley, I wanted to write to thank you all, your children and your family, for following all of the Government guidance in respect of the Coronavirus pandemic.

We should all feel incredibly proud of how well children and young people have adjusted to the tighter arrangements in our schools and my thanks to secondary school pupils for wearing face coverings in school and to you, for co-operating with regular asymptomatic testing.

Because asymptomatic testing is happening regularly, across schools, households and places of work, we are seeing a rise in case rates in Barnsley. This leads to more people having to self-isolate and we are seeing an increase in the numbers of classes having to self-isolate in our schools. This is particularly hard for children and young people who have already had their education severely disrupted over the last year, despite excellent remote and online home learning, and all your efforts to support your children's education.

Our schools have robust control measures in place, to minimise the risk of transmission and we maintain, that schools remain as safe as anywhere can be, during this time. But schools can only seek to control what happens in school, and not what happens within our communities.

I know that so much has been asked of you over this last year, but I ask that you support our schools and communities, by maintaining social distancing at the school gate and on the journey to and from school.

Controlling transmission of the virus in our communities and protecting people from infection, by following the government guidance, helps to control it within our schools, keeping children in school and minimizing further disruption to their education and to family life.

Finally, when you receive the offer of the vaccination, which I have very recently, I urge you and your family members, like me, to have it. As our Director of Public Health, Julia Burrow's says, 'every vaccination gives us hope'.

My thanks to you all.

Kind regards

Mel John-Ross  
Executive Director – Children's Services