

Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance

Office of the Medical Officer of Health

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3RR



21 October 2020

To all parents and carers

I am writing to you all in the lead up to the half-term break to commend you and your children for the amazing resilience and adaptability that you have shown over this term and to thank you all for supporting the measures that we have in place in schools and childcare settings to protect your families and our Island.

Staying safe as we move into winter

As much as we would all like life to return to normal, please be patient and as we move into winter take extra care to follow the public health guidance, which can be found at www.gov.je/coronavirus.

In particular, remember to:

- Look out for the three main symptoms of COVID-19 and if anyone in your household develops any one of those symptoms please ensure that the whole household goes into isolation, that your children are kept off school, or half term activities, and that you call the helpline on 445566 to arrange a test
- Strictly follow the isolation guidance if you or any member of your household is required to isolate because they are symptomatic, are identified as a direct contact or return from travel
- Continue to regularly wash your hands thoroughly and catch any coughs and sneezes and remind your children to follow these guidelines
- Follow the physical distancing guidance
- Support the contact tracing team by providing your contact details to any café, restaurant or venue you attend

As you may be aware, in recent weeks we have had three confirmed cases of Covid-19 within school settings. I would like to reassure you that the processes we have in place to manage such cases are robust. We have clear and established lines of communication between the schools, the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills, contact tracing and infection control that allow us to react quickly to ensure that the risk of any further spread of the virus within the school remains low.

I firmly believe that schools and childcare settings remain safe for your children to attend and it is important for them to do so. The global evidence continues to support the fact that children are unlikely to develop severe illness from COVID-19.

Staying safe at Halloween

Although children are not thought to be super spreaders of the virus, they can still pass it on. Therefore, we are asking all families to carefully consider which Halloween activities they choose to participate in. In particular, we ask that you avoid door-to-door trick or treating. Any activity that increases the number of people that you come into face-to-face contact with increases the risk of spreading the virus. For high risk Islanders, not only does this expose them to unnecessary risk, but it could also cause them high levels of anxiety during an already stressful period.

If you are planning a Halloween party for your children, friends and family please remember to follow the current Public Health guidelines and ensure that any informal social gathering or party does not exceed the maximum number allowed - which is 20 people. All of us have a responsibility to help prevent the spread of the virus and these limits are designed to keep Islanders safe. Please also keep track of who you spend time with, in case the information is required by contact tracing.

Thank you very much for your support in this matter and I hope that you and your families enjoy a happy and safe half term break.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan Muscat', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr Ivan Muscat
Deputy Medical Officer of Health