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16<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I have been asked for more information with regards to children attending school in the winter period with the increased risk of suffering with a common cold. We have worked with our health and safety team and colleagues in other Trusts to develop the attached guidance and flowchart which we hope will help.

However, I must point out that we are not health professionals and sadly have to make decisions during the current pandemic with the best of intentions for everyone concerned using the guidance available to us. I hope that the information attached is useful and will help you make an informed decision about attendance in school.

At the present time across the Trust we have a number of staff who are now waiting for tests or test results and we are managing to cover this without using 'supply cover'. Where possible we hope this can continue to be the case to avoid staff having to come from other schools into our own bubbles. With this in mind we are therefore continuing to err on the side of caution if your child presents at school with COVID-19 like symptoms. I realise this can have a significant impact on a family if we ask you to have your child tested however, as we are seeing across the North East the rate of infection is increasing and we are seeing more confirmed cases in Primary School age children.

Finally can I thank you again for your support as we have returned after the summer break. Clearly there have been some bumps in the road over the last week or two and I suspect there will be many more. However, I can promise you we are doing our best to make sure every child is able to access the education they deserve and be back in the normal routines and enjoying their learning.

Yours sincerely

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

**Paul Rickeard**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Durham Diocesan MAT**