

Dear Parent/Carer

Firstly, I would like to introduce myself as the new Director of Public Health for Torbay. It is an honour to be replacing Dr Caroline Dimond who has done a sterling job of implementing many local public health initiatives and navigating the people of Torbay through the toughest of times since the COVID-19 pandemic started last March.

I want to also say thank you to all the children, young people and families in Torbay for everything they have done to date, as I know it has been an incredibly difficult time. Although great progress has been made and our local testing and vaccination programmes have gained momentum, please remember we still have a way to go.

So as we approach half term, I would like you and your families to carry on the hard work and commitment you have shown so far. This means continuing to limit social contact outside your household's bubble, wearing face coverings where required and practicing rigorous hand washing.

I know holidays are a time when children and young people want to socialise, particularly as many of them are not able to see their friends at school but I urge you and your families to continue to follow the guidance set out by Government.

For those children of critical workers and our more vulnerable children, who are permitted to attend paid for holiday provision, we must ensure they continue to follow the guidance and not play or meet up with classmates outside of these settings.

If children and their families meet up outside of school, outside the current restrictions, this increases opportunities for the virus to spread between other members of the family and/or social circle. Having social contact against current guidance and restrictions in non COVID-secure environments will make it harder to beat this virus.

Also, I wanted to provide a reminder that if someone in your family, household or support bubble has symptoms of COVID-19 that person should get tested and the whole household should then self-isolate until you know the result. If you are told you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you must also self-isolate and you only need to get a test if you yourself develop symptoms. Please always follow the isolation advice you have been given.

If you require this in a different format or language, please contact me.



Finally, all is not lost this half term and there are still lots of things you do to make the holiday fun and keep everyone safe. The #ExploreFromYourDoor campaign is promoting a range of activities that you can still do. This includes exploring local footpaths on your doorstep, just download <https://footpathmap.co.uk> on your phone or tablet and see where it takes you. If the weather isn't great then you can immerse the family in some virtual adventures and activities in Torbay at [Virtual Activity Hub - English Riviera](#)

However you choose to spend your half term holidays, please make sure that you have a wonderful time but continue to follow Government guidance. If we all follow the rules, we can tackle this virus and begin to get back to normal.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lincoln Sargeant', written in a light grey or blue ink.

Dr Lincoln Sargeant

Director of Public Health, Torbay.