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Our ref: 02 02 02 21 Parent Carer  
Letter

Dear Parents and Carers

I am sure you will all be very worried about the recent news about the South African Variant of Covid 19, particularly if you live and work in the Southport PR9 area. Firstly, to stress that Public Health advice hasn't changed, and you should continue to follow the current National Lock Down advice and stay at home if you can, and of course follow the Hands, Face, Space message when you can't stay at home.

For schools, nurseries and colleges the current public health advice also remains in place and schools should remain open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children and continue to follow their Covid Risk Assessments as they have done so well throughout this pandemic. However if you are a critical worker please do consider if you are able to follow the government guidance which says '*parents and carers should keep their children at home if they can.*' There is no change in guidance in relation to the symptoms of Covid, however, if you child is unwell then please keep them at home.

Sefton will be shortly begin testing for the new variant in set post codes as advised by Public Health England and mainly in the Norwood ward, this is so we can work together to identify and suppress this Variant of the Virus. However, we must stress there is no evidence that this variant causes any more illness though it is more transmissible similar to the UK variant and there is currently no evidence that the vaccinations will not be effective.

We understand that this is a worrying time for everyone, but we are confident that by working together and following the advice we will continue to keep our school communities as safe as possible.

Regards



**VICKY BUCHANAN**  
Executive Director of Children's  
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**MARGARET JONES**  
Director of Public Health