

Dear Ms Priestley

Thank you for your email. I understand your frustrations about the lack of children's sport during this lock down, and I agree with you that sports provides children with life skills, along with a healthy lifestyle both physically and mentally. You must be very proud of both Isabelle and Samuel's sporting achievements, and I am sorry that their mental wellbeing suffered during the last lockdown.

This lockdown is different to the one in March. This lockdown should only last 28 days, and I very much hope we can bring the infection rate down enough for our lives to resume to something resembling normal in December. A number of MPs have pressed the Prime Minister to relax restrictions for children's sports and he has been very clear that the government has ruled it out due to the risk of chains of human contact increasing the risk of transmission.

As you know the situation is moving very quickly. The Government is trying to balance saving lives and public health needs with economic and community needs. This is a situation none of us wanted to be in, but we cannot wish it away. We can't ignore the rise in infections we're seeing across the country, including in Kent. And we cannot ignore the pressure this is putting on our NHS hospitals and frontline services. Despite our best efforts to control the virus with social distancing and local restrictions, it's clear that national measures are needed once again.

We can all help get through these difficult times, by following the guidance and looking out for each other. That sense of community spirit we rediscovered at the start of the pandemic will be needed more than ever. We face a tough winter ahead, but we will get through it together.

If my office can do anything to help, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes

Helen

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