



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

1 December 2021

*Dear Nicola and Mark,*

Thank you for your joint letter of 29 November about the emergence of the new Omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus. Thank you too for emphasising the importance of every part of the UK tackling this unwelcome development collectively, on which I completely agree.

As you know, Omicron has now been classed as a 'Variant of Concern' by the World Health Organisation, and early indications show that it spreads rapidly. As we expect Omicron case numbers to inevitably rise in the coming days, our strategy is to buy ourselves time and strengthen our defences while our world leading scientists learn more about this potential threat. We are therefore taking targeted, temporary and proportionate steps to help slow down the spread.

I have asked the Health Secretary to respond in fuller detail to the points raised in your letter, and you will be hearing from him shortly.

In the meantime, thank you once again for sharing your recommendations with me at this pivotal moment in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Best wishes  
Yours ever,  
Boris*

The Right Honourable Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
The Right Honourable Mark Drakeford AM