

From: DfE information <dfe.information@notifications.service.gov.uk>

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To: Janet Perry <janet.perry@tameside.gov.uk>

Subject: 4 March – Coronavirus – Daily update to all early years, children’s social care, schools and further education providers

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Tameside Council. This email claims to contain information about Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Please inspect the email carefully to verify this is not a phishing email before clicking any links or opening attachments. Please exercise caution. Do you trust the person? Does the email look genuine? Were you expecting the attachment?

This message is just a reminder to remain vigilant. If in any doubt, please contact the IT Service Desk or Cyber Security Officer.



This is your daily email to keep you updated on the government’s response to coronavirus (COVID-19). If you have colleagues who would like to receive this email directly, please ask them to use this [subscription form](#).

Guidance on the use of face coverings in primary schools and early years settings

From Monday 8 March, new advice applies to the use of face coverings by staff, pupils and students in schools and further education in England. Further information can be found in the [guidance for schools](#), [guidance for further education providers](#) and [guidance for early years and childcare providers](#).

In primary schools and early years settings it is recommended that staff and visitors wear face coverings where social distancing cannot be maintained between adults. These measures will be in place until Easter. As with all measures, we will keep this under review and update guidance as needed.

Children in primary schools do not need to wear a face covering and they should not be asked to wear one. Dr Susan Hopkins, the Chief Medical Adviser for NHS Test and Trace, has said that “the consensus among educationalists, public health and clinical specialists is that it is not advisable for primary school children to wear face coverings. That is why Public Health England has not recommended to the Department for Education that they should be worn by primary pupils in the classroom. Children need to see facial expressions to develop their communication and language skills and practically, they can have difficulties keeping them on all day.”

Asymptomatic testing information for parents and adults in households with children at school or college

NHS Test and Trace announced earlier this week, that all adults in households with school and college age children without symptoms can now access regular rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing.

Test kits can either be collected or ordered online, as set out below. You should not give test kits to parents, carers or household members and should not order more test kits for this purpose. Secondary school and college students will continue to access testing through their school or college.

Please share the information below with your parent networks to help answer any questions they may have.

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are [different ways](#) for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Children of primary school age (and below) without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

NASUWT letter on employer liability

You may have seen the letter dated Friday 26 February from the NASUWT to Directors of Education and Children's Services, CEOs of MATs, sixth-form colleges and independent schools. We have had some queries relating to the letter's content on employer liability and the role of staff and union representatives in school plans. We thought it helpful to make some observations, to correct any misapprehensions you may have.

In our view, if a member of your staff is exposed to coronavirus (COVID-19) in the workplace and subsequently becomes unwell

or worse, it does not automatically follow that any legal liability would rest with the employer. This also takes into account any transmission to another member of their household. In asking schools to welcome all pupils from Monday 8 March, the government has taken account of human rights and health and safety laws, and the guidance which we produce for schools and colleges is always drafted with a view to helping them meet their legal obligations.

The Department for Education's view is that if settings follow our guidance (which has been endorsed by Public Health England) and meet their obligations under health and safety laws, then they will also meet their obligations under human rights laws. Our guidance is consistent with the obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of your staff. Our guidance encourages you to take a proactive approach to risk assessment, and to keep your risk assessments and the measures put in place in your setting under constant review – especially in the light of updated measures.

You should also keep your staff and their representatives up to date on the measures and consult with your staff's health and safety representatives. We encourage you to consult with a view to reaching agreement, but we recognise there may be instances where the full agreement of your staff and their representatives may be not possible. This should not be a barrier to welcoming all pupils back to school.

Urgent advice following Microsoft vulnerabilities announcement

Microsoft has made public that a number of attacks have been made on Exchange servers through easily exploitable but highly impacting vulnerabilities. In response, they have released multiple security updates for affected servers.

We recommend following vendor best practice advice in the mitigation of vulnerabilities. In this case, the most important aspect is to install the latest updates immediately.

More information about the [security updates can be found on Microsoft's website](#) and advice from the [advice from the National Cyber Security Centre](#).

We strongly recommend that schools that use Microsoft Exchange:

- read the guidance referenced above
- install the necessary updates immediately
- stay informed of any future updates to the guidance from Microsoft (via the links above)

Educational settings status form changes from Monday 8 March

From Monday 8 March, as part of the [educational setting status form](#), we will be asking you to provide information on:

- the number of pupils or students not on site as part of the phased return process, for the settings undertaking lateral flow testing
- for the settings offering onsite wraparound provision, the number of pupils including vulnerable children in wraparound provision, pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or social worker and the number of those who could not be offered a place

Further guidance on completing the educational setting status form and the full list of questions for schools and colleges will be updated shortly, in the [guidance on recording attendance during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

Please provide your data by 2pm each working day.

The information you provide through the form continues to support the government's response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Your data will help us build a national picture of educational provision and enable us to focus support more effectively, help inform the government's response and ensure children and young people are safe.

If your school or college is closed for any reason other than a planned holiday (for example, on public health advice due to coronavirus (COVID-19), for non-coronavirus (COVID-19) reasons or a planned teacher training inset day), please continue to complete the form.

If you have any questions that are not answered by the guidance, please call the Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline on 0800 046 8687.

Travelling to school safely

As part of your ongoing communications with your pupils and their parents, you may wish to share the following messages on how pupils can travel to and from school safely:

- if you live a short distance from your school or college, walk, cycle or scoot to and from school wherever it is possible and safe to do so
- avoid sharing a car with anyone outside of your household or support bubble
- if you are using public transport to get to school or college, plan ahead and allow more time for your journey
- when you are travelling by public or dedicated school transport, don't forget to:

- wear a face covering (unless you are exempt, including if you are aged 11 and under). It is important you wear them for the entirety of your journey, including inside a bus or train station
- social distance where possible
- wash or sanitise your hands regularly
- be considerate to fellow passengers and staff.

Further information can be found in our [guidance on transport to school and other places of education](#). The Department for Transport has also created [resources](#) that can be downloaded and used by education settings to promote safe travel to school.

National Tutoring Programme – subsidised tutoring available

The National Tutoring Programme (NTP) has been supporting disadvantaged pupils across England since November 2020. Since January 2021, the NTP has supported pupils learning remotely through online tuition, as well as continuing to offer face-to-face provision to vulnerable pupils in schools. The NTP will support more schools and pupils as they return to the classroom from Monday 8 March.

The NTP is hosting a webinar on Tuesday 23 March at 4pm, where you can hear directly from Tuition Partner organisations and learn about how to apply for this subsidy.

Register for the webinar using the link below:

[NTP Tuition Partners webinar for Schools – Tuesday 23 March at 4pm](#)

To find out further information, or to find NTP Tuition Partners working in your area, visit the [National Tutoring Programme](#) website.

The information below has not changed since our last update

Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) is available to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm

Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 6pm

Please listen carefully to all of the available options before selecting the most appropriate option for your nursery, school, college or university.

Look up your unique organisation number (UON)

If you have not received your unique organisation number (UON) for ordering new coronavirus (COVID-19) test kits you can [look it up using your unique reference number \(URN\) or your UK provider reference number \(UKPRN\)](#) or by calling the Test and Trace helpdesk on 119.

Department for Education guidance

Our guidance to support education providers, local authorities and parents during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak can be accessed using the links below:

- [guidance for early years and childcare providers](#)
- [guidance for schools](#)
- [guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- [guidance for local authority children's services](#)