

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

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Subject: 15 December – Coronavirus – Daily update to all early years, children’s social care, schools and further education providers

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

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).

Coronavirus testing for schools and colleges from January

Today we have announced that from January teachers and pupils will have access to [rapid testing to help keep schools and colleges open](#) throughout the spring term.

From January, and starting with secondary schools, including all special schools and alternative provision, the education workforce will be eligible for weekly on the spot tests. This will help identify asymptomatic cases – which make up a third of all cases – limiting the spread of the virus. This will be backed up by daily testing for staff who have been in close contact with a positive case therefore eliminating the need for self-isolation; allowing them to continue to come into school or college.

Students and pupils will be eligible for daily testing if they have been in close contact with a positive case.

You can read the [press notice](#) and a [detailed Q&A for parents](#), but here is a summary of the key details of the announcement:

- Teachers and pupils will have access to rapid testing from January.
- Staff who are in close contact with cases will be eligible for daily testing, eliminating the need for immediate self-isolation. Only if a daily test returns a positive result will the staff member need to isolate.
- Testing will roll out as rapidly as possible from January, starting with staff and moving quickly on to serial testing of students.
- It is the decision of the individual school or college when they would like to begin accessing this new dedicated testing capacity.

[Detailed operational guidance and training materials](#) are available to secondary schools and colleges so they are able to use the new testing capacity from the first week of the spring term.

What schools have said about testing

Rapid testing builds on the success of testing pilots in schools and colleges over the past few months.

Wye School in Kent took part in the COVID-19 mass testing pilot. Their Principal, Luke Magee, answers questions for senior leaders on the [DfE Teacher Blog](#).

Hamid Patel, CEO of Star Academies, a trust with schools participating in the autumn testing trials, said:

“Testing was arranged to be as unintrusive as possible, and the benefits have been tremendous.

Attendance has improved as fewer close contacts have been

required to self-isolate. Parents who may have been wavering have gained confidence to send their children to school, and staff have been reassured by the availability of testing.

Testing has allowed us to refocus on teaching and learning. I am heartened that the scheme is to be rolled out nationally: it is a game-changer for the sector.”

Gerard Garvey, Principal of Newcastle Sixth Form College, a college participating in the autumn testing trials, said:

“Testing at Newcastle Sixth Form College has given all of our students and staff the reassurance that the college is a safe environment for them to work and study.

The testing process is smooth and has minimal impact on teaching and learning.

The daily testing of close contacts has enabled students who would normally have had to self-isolate to continue to attend and enjoy the benefits of face-to-face teaching.”

If you have any further coronavirus (COVID-19) related questions, please contact the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 (Mon-Fri, 8am to 6pm and Sat-Sun, 10am to 6pm).

Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

We have updated the guidance for [actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) to include updated information on Ofsted quality assurance visits in the summer term, 30-hour childcare entitlements in the autumn and the change to days of self-isolation from 14 to 10 days.

Update to safe working guidance

The [safe working in education, childcare and children’s social care settings](#), including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

guidance has been updated. The main changes from previous guidance are:

- updated guidance on the supply of PPE
- further guidance for residential settings

The information below has not changed since our last update

Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline – holiday hours

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) will be available over the holidays to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care. These helplines will close on the bank holidays and have shortened opening hours on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours:

24 December – 8am to 4pm

25 to 28 December – Closed

29 to 30 December – 8am to 6pm

31 December – 9am to 4pm

1 January – Closed

2 to 3 January – 10am to 6pm

Until 24 December, the helpline opening hours are:

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.

Please select option 1 or 2 if you require specific advice on the action to take to respond to a positive case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in your setting. This option will take you through to a dedicated team of NHS Business Services Authority advisors who will work through a risk assessment with you to identify close contacts and will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice.

Please select option 3 or 4 for any other questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

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](#)

- › [Guidance for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings](#)