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

Subject: 20 January – 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](#).

Update on the testing programme and daily contact testing

Recent media coverage has suggested that the programme of mass testing of staff and pupils in secondary schools and colleges has paused, this is incorrect.

The main schools and colleges testing programme, using rapid lateral flow tests to find asymptomatic staff and pupils and those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) but do not have symptoms, is playing an important role in breaking chains of transmission and is continuing.

Following new advice from NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England (PHE), we are temporarily pausing the daily

contact testing element of the testing programme, which was in place as an alternative to self-isolation for those who came into contact with positive cases in schools.

Daily contact testing was initially introduced into secondary schools and colleges with the agreement of Public Health England, based on the best scientific understanding available at the time. NHS Test and Trace and PHE have reviewed their initial advice in light of the higher prevalence and rates of transmission of the new variant, and concluded that these changes in the virus warrant further evaluation work. This evaluation will consider the impact of using daily contact testing instead of self-isolation to make sure it is achieving its aim of breaking chains of transmission and reducing cases of the virus in the community.

Daily contact testing was initially introduced into secondary schools and colleges with the agreement of Public Health England, based on the best scientific understanding available at the time. NHS Test and Trace and PHE have reviewed their initial advice and now concluded that, in light of the higher prevalence and rates of transmission of the new variant, further evaluation work is required. This evaluation will consider the impact of using daily contact testing instead of self-isolation to make sure it is achieving its aim of breaking chains of transmission and reducing cases of the virus in the community.

NHS Test and Trace and PHE will conduct this structured evaluation of daily contact testing as part of a wider evaluation of daily contact testing in a range of private and public settings, such as John Lewis and NHS Trust staff. DfE will support this evaluation so that its findings can contribute to further public health advice on daily contact testing in education settings. Schools or colleges who have found daily contact testing helpful and would like to take part in the evaluation should contact the NHS Test and Trace evaluation team: dct-pilotpmo@dhsc.gov.uk.

Twice weekly testing for staff in secondary schools and colleges

Rapid testing remains a vital part of our plan to suppress this virus. The use of rapid lateral flow tests is already proving beneficial in finding people with coronavirus (COVID-19) before they develop symptoms. We will therefore also be encouraging schools and colleges to increase regular testing of staff to twice weekly as further reassurance and to break chains of transmission during this period. Our guidance for secondary schools and colleges will be updated shortly.

Guidance for staff testing in primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools

On 13 January we confirmed that primary schools (including school-based nurseries) and maintained nursery schools, should expect to receive a delivery of home testing kits beginning this week. Deliveries will be staggered to primary schools throughout this week. If you have not received your delivery by Wednesday 27 January, please contact the DfE coronavirus (COVID-19) helpdesk on 0800 046 8687.

We have now published guidance for [testing primary, school-based nursery and maintained nursery school staff](#) to support you with this. Further information, guidance and resources to support rapid testing will be available shortly on the [primary schools document sharing platform](#).

Updated delivery schedule for testing products

Some schools on our delivery schedule that were due to receive their test kits on Tuesday 19 January will now receive that

delivery a week later on Tuesday 26 January due to constraints on stock of the test kits. You can find updated delivery schedules and allocations for [primary schools and nurseries](#) and [secondary schools and colleges](#) on the document sharing platforms.

If an all-through school is on this primary master list, they will be receiving a delivery of self-test kits. As these schools also have secondary age pupils, they will require the test kits and equipment in addition to the initial delivery. This may result in a small number of schools receiving both sets of testing kit and equipment.

Schools will be able access recordings of the webinars, which will be uploaded onto the [Department for Education YouTube](#) page shortly, or refer to the [‘how to’ guide](#) to identify the correct set of instructions to use when issuing the test kits.

Asymptomatic testing of adults who are attending colleges onsite

In some cases, adult students will be attending colleges. These adults can be tested if they are attending college onsite.

The asymptomatic testing programme does not replace the government’s current testing policy for those with symptoms. If you have symptoms, you should continue to book a test via the [NHS website](#) or by calling 119 in England and Wales, or 0300 303 2713 in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Get internet access for disadvantaged children

The Department for Education is working in partnership with mobile network operators to help schools support disadvantaged pupils in years 3 to 11 who do not have a fixed broadband

connection and rely on a mobile internet connection to access remote education.

Schools, trusts and local authorities are encouraged to request free mobile data increases for families if they're experiencing disruption to face to face education.

Guidance for schools on [increasing data allowances on mobile devices to support disadvantaged children](#) explains how and when to make a request.

The department is also giving colleges, schools, trusts and local authorities 4G wireless routers to lend to disadvantaged children in years 3 to 11, and those in 16 to 19 education. This is in addition to routers already dispatched to local authorities and academy trusts in the summer 2020 term.

Local authorities and trusts that received 4G wireless routers in the summer should log in to the [Support Portal](#) to identify unused routers and reallocate these to children and young people with the greatest need.

Further guidance on [getting internet access](#) is also available.

The information below has not changed since our last update

Extension of military support for secondary schools and colleges

Secondary schools and colleges can continue to access military support to help set up testing sites. This support has been extended until the end of January.

The military can provide virtual training and advice on establishing the testing process, with teams on standby to provide in-person support to set up the testing site if required. If

secondary schools and colleges have not yet signed up for the testing programme or started testing, please do consider accessing this support before the end of January.

A smaller amount of military support will be available from 30 January, until February half-term, but only in exceptional circumstances as schools and colleges should already have their testing capability set up and testing should have started.

To request support, please contact the DfE coronavirus (COVID-19) helpdesk on 0800 046 8687.

The following are examples where the military have provided support to help set up testing sites.

The Priory Learning Trust

The military assisted the Priory Learning Trust by providing tailored advice and support to assist with setting up testing sites at three different schools. The trust was very grateful to the military for being accommodating, visiting their various sites and undertaking a roleplay to walk through the flow of the set up.

“The reassurance that we are moving in the right direction and have covered what we need was really appreciated.” (Priory Learning Trust)

Ivybridge Community College

Ivybridge Community College has around 2500 students and 300 staff. Military support was requested to help run a test pilot day to ensure the process and organisation for testing was fit for purpose for the size of the college. The day was used as an opportunity for both parties to discuss ideas and to refine its operation.

Staff Sergeant Campbell said, “The College has set the standard for the area. The staff have been trained to an excellent standard by the College team and they have all the procedures in place. They should be very proud of what they have achieved, and we wish them all the best”.

The [press release from the college](#) is available to view.

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](#)