

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

Sent: 26 March 2021 16:03

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

Subject: 26 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](#).

Letter to children and young people from the Secretary of State for Education

The Secretary of State for Education has today written to children and young people to recognise the impact of the disruption they have faced over the past year and to thank them for their resilience. He outlines his continued commitment to supporting children and young people to recover from the disruption now that they have returned to school and college. The letter also highlights the importance of coronavirus (COVID-19) testing and the vital role this plays in helping to prevent the virus spreading.

The letter is published on the [DfE media blog](#) and on DfE’s [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Please do share this letter directly with children and young people in your school or college.

Updated guidance for schools

We have updated our [guidance for schools](#) to include information on Test and Trace support payments, the expectations for clinically extremely vulnerable pupils and staff, educational visits, wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity, physical activity in schools and inspections. We have also added guidance on year 11 to 13 exam cohort attendance and provision for the 2021 summer term.

Updated guidance for further education providers

We have updated our [operational guidance for further education providers](#) to set out our expectations for the summer term in line with the coronavirus (COVID-19) roadmap steps. We have also added new information on extra-curricular activity, sports activities and educational day, residential and international visits.

Updated guidance for after-school clubs and out-of-school settings

We have updated our [guidance for providers of after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings](#) and our [guidance for parents of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

These updates provide advice on group sizes for outdoor activities from Monday 29 March and an update on when educational visits can resume.

We have also updated the section on asymptomatic testing to reflect that all wraparound care providers can now access

asymptomatic testing. As critical workers, staff working in wraparound childcare, including those not operating on school sites, are being prioritised for asymptomatic testing through local community testing programmes.

Testing and contact tracing in schools and colleges over the Easter holidays

Following the success of the asymptomatic testing programme on the return to school and college, it is vital to keep testing at home throughout the Easter holidays and into the summer term. Staff and students should:

- continue to test twice a week at home (all those who are able to)
- report positive, negative or void results using the [report a COVID-19 rapid lateral flow test result](#) portal
- test before returning to school or college for the summer term, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back to find and isolate any positive cases

We need to ask schools and further education providers to continue with contact tracing over the Easter holidays.

For the purposes of contact tracing staff, students, parents and carers need only inform the education setting of a positive case if the symptoms develop within 2 days of being in their education setting or they have tested positive with a lateral flow device (LFD) test (and will subsequently need to book a confirmatory PCR test). You are asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in their education setting. If symptoms develop after 2 days, they do not need to inform the setting.

Where pupils, students or staff test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the holidays using an LFD test more than 2

days since being in an education setting, they will only need to inform their education setting if they will still be self-isolating when settings return. Staff, students, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

Staff do not need to be available for contact tracing duties beyond the first 6 days of the Easter holidays, at which point all positive cases should be dealt with through NHS Test and Trace. This means that where a school or further education provider ends face-to-face education on Friday 26 March, there will be no need to remain on-call after Thursday 1 April.

Staff responsible for contact tracing are not asked to be on-call at all times and may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email).

Where pupils or students need to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case during the holidays, settings do not need to be informed about this until the first day of the Summer term.

Test kit supplies for secondary schools and colleges after the Easter holiday

Secondary schools and colleges will be receiving a further replenishment of self-test kits for staff and pupils after the Easter holiday. You do not need to place an order for them, these self-test kits will be sent automatically to your setting. You can expect to receive this delivery in the second half of April, once you return from the Easter holiday. We will be publishing a delivery schedule shortly so that you can see the exact date for your scheduled delivery.

If you need additional supplies of asymptomatic site testing kit, you should continue to place orders using the [online form](#).

Please continue to monitor the daily emails for further updates on the delivery of self-test kits.

Free school meals during the Easter holidays

Schools do not need to provide lunch parcels or vouchers during the Easter holidays. The government provides support with food and other essentials through the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. This scheme, run by local authorities, has operated successfully since November including over the Christmas and February half term holidays. The scheme ensures that individuals, families and children who require it, including those eligible for free school meals, can receive the support they need.

Further information on the provision of free school meals and the COVID Winter Grant Scheme can be found in our guidance on [providing school meals during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

Information on the private candidate support grant in schools, colleges, and other exam centres

The Department for Education has previously published [guidance on the private candidate support grant](#) which provides information on eligibility for schools, colleges and other exam centres, to claim funding for assessing private candidates, including home educated students and adult learners, this summer. The announcement follows the government's commitment to making sure that private candidates due to sit GCSEs, AS and A levels, and some vocational qualifications will be able to receive a grade this summer at a similar cost to a normal year.

Centres have previously received an email from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) asking them to complete a survey to

express interest in supporting additional private candidates. Centres are reminded that their responses to this survey are required this week (by 00.01am on Monday 29 March). This will enable the JCQ to publish the list of available centres on their website by the end of March. Centres that have not received this survey should contact NCN@ocr.org.uk. We encourage all available exam centres to help these candidates achieve their qualifications in this exceptional year.

Update for schools and colleges on alternative arrangements for qualifications in 2021

In our February announcement on the [alternative arrangements for awarding qualifications in 2021](#), we committed to providing teachers with the guidance and support they need to make assessments of their students.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has now [published guidance](#), including:

- advice on completing your centre policy
- a step-by-step guide on determining grades, including advice on the types of evidence that can be used
- information on internal and external quality assurance processes

We trust teachers in their decision making and want students and their parents or carers to be confident that they will receive grades that enable them to progress to the next stage of their lives. The guidance published this week will support teachers to do this to support consistency and fairness for students in schools and colleges.

Students should feel confident in their teacher assessed grades this year, however an appeals system will be there as a safety

net in case errors are not picked up earlier in the process. JCQ has also provided details on the appeals process in their guidance published today. The government will provide funding to awarding organisations with respect to formal appeals of teacher assessed grades submitted to them by state-funded providers and any providers on behalf of private candidates. These centres will therefore not need to pay a fee to awarding bodies when submitting their appeal. Centres will be expected to absorb the cost of the initial review within their budgets.

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

Easter opening hours:

Friday 2 April to Monday 5 April from 10am to 4pm

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.

Private, voluntary and independent nurseries do not need a UON.

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 special schools and other specialist settings](#)
- [guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- [guidance for local authority children's services](#)