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

Subject: 12 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](#).

Delivery of face coverings to support contingency stock in early years and primary schools

In line with Public Health England (PHE) advice, the Department for Education has temporarily extended its policy on the use of face coverings in education and childcare settings, as an additional precautionary measure during this period of high coronavirus (COVID-19) prevalence in the community.

In primary schools and early years settings, we now recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff and adult visitors where social distancing between adults is not possible (for example, when moving around in corridors and communal

areas). Children in these settings should not be asked to wear face coverings.

We expect that most adults will already have access to face coverings from their wider use in society, however, it is recommended that all settings have a small contingency stock of face coverings available, should an individual have forgotten, lost or damaged their own.

To support the return to full attendance and ensure maximum compliance with the system of controls, the Department of Health and Social Care is completing a one-off delivery of approximately 450 'Type IIR' masks to early years providers (maintained nursery schools, school-based nurseries, and private, voluntary and independent nurseries) and primary schools where there are multiple members of adult staff and visitors on the premises. This supply is to be used as a contingency stock and you should expect to receive your delivery by Wednesday 17 March.

Childminders will not receive a direct delivery of contingency face covering stock, however you can request a small number (approximately 2 to 5 per childminder) of face coverings from your local nursery or primary school to use only as contingency stock. Nurseries and primary schools should consider how much stock they have available and should use their discretion when deciding if they can support childminders.

These face coverings are being provided by the Department of Health and Social Care at no cost to your setting. They cannot accept any returns for these items.

Secondary schools and further education colleges have already received a delivery of Type IIR masks for use as their contingency face coverings stock.

If you have any queries or complaints on delivery or missing items, please contact the Department of Health and Social Care personal protective equipment (PPE) helpline (provided by

UNIPART) on 0800 876 6802, identifying yourself as an education setting. Alternatively, you can email dfeppequeries@unipart.com and your query will be handled by the helpline team.

Further information on the [use of face coverings in education](#) can be found in our guidance.

Easter holidays

Schools and further education providers are not expected to provide educational activities to eligible pupils and students during the Easter holidays, unless they specifically wish to do so.

This Easter sees the expanded launch of the Holiday Activities and Food programme, as well as easing of restrictions on wraparound care and out-of-school activity providers for children and organised sport for all ages. We are therefore asking schools and further education providers to discuss with their local authorities what support they might be able to provide, for example by making premises available for external wraparound childcare, or to other out-of-school activity providers.

Free school meal provision over the Easter holiday

Schools and further education providers do not need to provide lunch parcels or vouchers during the Easter holidays. The COVID Winter Grant Scheme is in place to support individuals, families and children with food and other essentials outside of term-time and will operate through the Easter holidays. This scheme, run by local authorities, operated successfully in the Christmas and February half-term holidays and ensures that 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](#).

Asymptomatic testing of staff and pupils in schools and colleges over the Easter holiday

It is important for staff and students to keep testing through the Easter holidays to manage the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), as part of a regular habit of testing at home every 3-4 days (twice a week). NHS Test and Trace will be supplying sufficient test kits to schools and colleges to enable this to happen.

A letter template has been added onto the [secondary schools and colleges document sharing platform](#) to support your communications to parents and carers. This covers testing for pupils over the Easter holiday and reporting results, as well as a reminder of the offer of parent and household testing.

We will also be hosting a webinar on Wednesday 17 March at 12pm for secondary schools and colleges on the move to testing at home and testing over Easter.

Secondary schools and colleges can join the webinar using this link:

[At home coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing webinar – Wednesday 17 March at 12pm](#).

As always, a recording of this webinar will be available to watch shortly after and can be accessed using the link above.

Test kit supplies for secondary schools and colleges

You will receive a further delivery of test at home kits for staff, pupils and students in the week beginning Monday 15 March. There is no need to place an order for them, deliveries will be made between Monday 15 and Friday 19 March.

Please check the [delivery schedule](#) to see when your kits are scheduled for delivery.

Test kit supplies for primary schools, school-based nurseries and maintained nursery schools

You will need to use the [contact us form](#) to place orders for additional test at home kits to enable twice-weekly testing of staff to continue over the Easter period.

Orders placed before 5pm on Wednesdays will arrive the following week, after this time orders will be processed and delivered the subsequent week. Therefore, we advise that you place an order no later than 5pm on Wednesday 17 March to ensure delivery in week commencing Monday 22 March.

Further information on how to order additional test at home kits and details on the national testing policy can be found on the [primary schools and nurseries document sharing platform](#).

Test kit supplies for private, voluntary and independent nurseries

You will have received a delivery of test kits either today or yesterday. You will be able to report any missing kits or delivery issues using an online form from Monday 15 March. We will provide additional information on that day.

Contact tracing over the Easter holidays

Schools and further education providers continue to play an important role in contact tracing and the national effort to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). We recognise the challenges of this responsibility during holidays and would like to thank everyone for their continued support. Asking establishments to provide contact tracing support is a key part of the test and trace process, as schools and further education providers hold the data about close contacts and pupil contact details. We will continue to keep these arrangements under review and will continue to try to reduce the burden on staff.

We need to ask schools and further education providers to continue with contact tracing over Easter, similar to the arrangements over Christmas.

Staff, students, parents and carers only need to inform the school or further education provider of a positive case where they developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in their education setting. 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.

Where pupils, students or staff test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) during the holidays, having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in an education setting, you are not required to take any action. 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.

The Department for Education coronavirus (COVID-19) helpline and the PHE Advice Service will remain open over the Easter holidays to answer any questions you have about coronavirus (COVID-19) relating to education settings and children's social care.

Isolating after a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test

We have heard from schools that some parents are frustrated that their children have been sent home from school as a result of receiving a positive coronavirus (COVID-19) test result or being a close contact of someone who has tested positive, particularly if they have then obtained a PCR test for their child and they have tested negative on that. You may want to use the following text with any parents who raise this as an issue with you:

As schools return to full attendance, we understand parents' frustration when their child is asked to isolate at home either after testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or because of being in close contact of someone who has tested positive.

However self-isolation is one of the most important things we can do to help stop the spread of the virus and help protect our friends, family and our community. Around one in three people with coronavirus (COVID-19) have no symptoms, and so finding and isolating these hidden cases quickly will help to stop outbreaks before they get a chance to develop.

If your child has tested positive having been tested using a lateral flow device (LFD) test at school, they do not need a PCR confirmation because these tests are done in a supervised environment. Lateral flow device tests are at least 99.9% specific, meaning the likelihood of a false positive is extremely low – less than 1 in every 1,000. PCR testing will always carry a risk of producing false negatives. At the moment, carrying out LFD tests in supervised conditions and not carrying out confirmatory PCR testing means we capture the maximum possible number of coronavirus (COVID-19) infections during the initial return to school period.

Once your child starts testing at home using lateral flow tests, positive results must be followed up with a confirmatory PCR test (as these tests are not conducted in a controlled environment).

Updated guidance on transport to school and other places of education

We have updated our [guidance on transport to school and other places of education](#) to include additional information on identifying close contacts if someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) travelled on dedicated transport.

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](#)