STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Dear Parent / Guardian

Stockport schools and child-care settings have worked very hard to make sure they are safe for the children to return. If you have visited a school or setting you will have noticed the one-way systems that schools have implemented, you will know that hand sanitisers are often available, that children are washing their hands frequently during the day. Internally schools and settings have also increased their cleaning routines and touch surfaces are regularly cleaned throughout the day.

The council has worked closely with schools and settings to make sure they are responding to the latest guidance in relation to covid-19. The guidance is set and regularly updated by the government. Schools/settings are continuing to respond and adapt to ensure they are doing the best they can to keep all children, staff and visitors safe.

However unfortunately this will not necessarily prevent a positive case of covid-19 emerging within the school community.

We are trying very hard to keep our schools and settings open. To do this, we need to make sure that anyone with a possible infection does not come to their school or setting. If anyone becomes symptomatic whilst at the school/setting they will need to leave the site as soon as possible.

If children who have the virus remain in school or in their childcare setting, there is a serious possibility that a bubble or group of children may need to be sent home. Keeping a child with symptoms at home will help to prevent this.

We also know it's great to catch up with other parents, after months of not seeing each other. Please remember the "rule of six" applies outdoors as well as indoors (and includes children) - keep two metres away from any one you do not live with and move away from the school gates so that we can keep the main routes in and out of our schools clear for both the school and any close neighbours. If you have older children who travel to school independently, please remind them of this too.

We understand that children having to stay at home – or even whole households – is not easy or ideal, but we are asking for your support so that we can together stop the spread of covid-19, keep our children and families safe and keep our schools and settings open for the majority of children.

We know that the return to school has brought additional challenges for parents too, particularly when it comes to knowing what to do if your child has symptoms, if you or a household member has symptoms or if your child is sent home due to a case in their school. Over the page are the answers to a few frequently asked questions and the attached grid provides a helpful guide for you about what to do.

Thank you for your ongoing understanding and support.

Chris McLoughlin,
Director of Children's Services

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are the symptoms of covid-19?

The symptoms of covid-19 are a new continuous cough; a high temperature; or a loss of taste or smell

What is the difference between a new continuous cough and a normal cough (for example, from a cold)?

A new continuous cough may include:
- Coughing a lot for an hour or more
- Three or more coughing episodes in a 24-hour period

The new continuous cough should be 'out of the ordinary' for your child

What does self-isolation mean?

Self-isolation means staying at home and not leaving for any reason other than to get a covid test. Sometimes one person will need to self-isolate and sometimes the whole household. This is explained in the attached grid which sets out what to do in different situations. You should also not have visitors to your house during this time, other than to drop of items at the door – for example, shopping. If you have been advised to self-isolate and have no support network to help you access basics such as food shopping please phone our **Coronavirus Helpline on 0161 217 6046.**

My child/someone in my household has symptoms but I can't get a test. What do I do?

We're aware that, due to national capacity problems, it might be difficult to access covid-19 testing appointments when someone in your household develops symptoms. Please follow the suggestions below to access testing:
- Visit https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test
- Enter the details of the person who has symptoms, and select either a walk-in or drive-in test appointment or (when available) a postal test kit
  - Postal test kits seem to become available after 7am, normally arrive the next day, and are delivered by Amazon. If you have a choice, a same-day test appointment will normally give a faster result
- If there are no appointments, keep trying at intervals throughout the day:
  - New appointments tend to be released just after 8am, 10am, 12pm and so on throughout the day
  - You can get the screen to update by switching between walk-in and drive-in options
- If you don't have internet access, ask someone who does have internet access to try for you, or phone 119 to request a test. You should still expect to need to try multiple times

Whilst we understand this can be very frustrating and time-consuming, please do keep trying until you get a test and do not send your child to school if they are symptomatic.

Yours sincerely

Chris McLoughlin
Director of Children's Services

Stephen Nyakatawa
Interim Director of Education Services
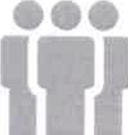
Chris McLoughlin,
Director of Children's Services

COVID-19 (coronavirus) absence: A quick guide for parents / carers

GREATER MANCHESTER
DOING HEALTH DIFFERENTLY

What to do if...	Action needed	Back to school...
...my child has COVID-19 (coronavirus) symptoms*	• Child shouldn't attend school • Child should get a test • Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result • Inform school immediately about test results	...when child's test **comes back negative** provided they have been fever free for the 48 hours before returning to school, and feel well
...my child tests positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)	• Child shouldn't attend school • Child self-isolates for at least 10 days from when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) • Inform school immediately about test results • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - *even if someone tests negative during those 14 days*	...after 10 days, once **child feels better, and has been fever-free for at least 48 hours** They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of smell / taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone.
...somebody in my household has COVID-19 (coronavirus) symptoms*	• Child shouldn't attend school • Household member with symptoms should get a test • Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result • Inform school immediately about test results	...when household member test is negative, and child does not have COVID-19 symptoms*
...somebody in my household has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)	• Child shouldn't attend school • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - *even if someone tests negative during those 14 days*	...when child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during the 14 days

Symptoms include at least one of a high temperature; a new continuous cough; a loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste.

See more at: nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms

What to do if...	Action needed	Back to school...
...NHS Test and Trace has identified my child as a 'close contact' of a confirmed COVID-19 (coronavirus) case	• Child shouldn't attend school • Child self-isolates for 14 days (as advised by NHS Test and Trace) – even if they test negative during those 14 days • Rest of household does not need to self-isolate, unless they are a 'close contact' too	...when the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during those 14 days
...we / my child has travelled and has to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine	• Do not take unauthorised leave in term time • Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice when booking travel • Provide information to school as per attendance policy **Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:** • Child shouldn't attend school • Whole household self-isolates for 14 days – even if they test negative during those 14 days	...when the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed for the child, even if they test negative during those 14 days
...we have received advice from a medical / official source that my child must resume shielding	• Child shouldn't attend school • Contact school as advised by attendance officer / pastoral team • Child should shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again	...when school / other agencies inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again
....I am not sure who should get a test for COVID -19 (coronavirus)	• Only people with symptoms* need to get a test • People without symptoms are not advised to get a test, even if they are a 'close contact' of someone who tests positive	...when conditions above, as matching your situation, are met

If anyone in your household has symptoms*, book a free COVID-19 test at nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119

For further information visit gov.uk/backtoschool