

CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN A SPECIAL SCHOOL SETTING – INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF

Where a case of confirmed COVID-19 (Coronavirus) has been reported in a person with links to a school setting, all close contacts of the case who need to take specific actions with regard to testing and self-isolation will be identified, contacted and advised by the Public Health Agency (PHA) Contact Tracing Service. Your child (or you if a staff member) has not been identified as a close contact. However COVID-19 is circulating at high levels in the wider community and there has been a case in the school so this letter is to inform you of actions you should take.

What to do if you or your child develops symptoms of COVID 19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Please book a free PCR test, even if an earlier one was negative. Your child should stay at home and self-isolate until you receive the result. Please see [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): self-isolating | nidirect](#) for guidance on whether other people in your household also need to self-isolate while you are waiting for your child's PCR result.

Tests can be arranged at your closest testing site or by requesting a postal kit which will be sent to your home address. You can choose whichever option is more convenient for

you. Going for a COVID test is one of the reasons your child can leave home during the self-isolation period, however, they should not use public transport. Please order a postal test if you do not have private transport to a test site.

If you are contacted in the future by the PHA Contact Tracing Service, the call will come from 028 9536 888. Please save this number on your phone so you will recognise it and please answer if called.

Regular testing without symptoms, using LAMP

Regular testing even when you don't have symptoms can help keep you and your community safe. Free weekly saliva LAMP tests are available through special schools for all staff and pupils. **If you have not joined the LAMP programme yet we would strongly encourage you to do so. Please ask your school for details.**

They are intended to be used by people who do not have any symptoms of COVID-19 and have not been identified as close contacts of a known case. They are useful to identify people who would otherwise not have known they had COVID-19, avoiding onward transmission. **They should only be used if you have no symptoms - individuals with COVID-19 symptoms should arrange a PCR test.**

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19:

- **Please get vaccinated if you are eligible and haven't already done so**
- take part in regular LAMP testing
- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Keep rooms well ventilated

Further information

For further information, please see the NI Direct website [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): self-isolating | nidirect](#) the Public Health Agency website <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus> or contact NHS 111. If you or your child feels unwell and you are worried about their symptoms or about anyone else in the home, please contact your GP.

Yours faithfully

PHA Schools Team