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Date: Friday 11th June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for your commitment to keeping our schools and our communities safe during the pandemic, especially over the last term.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, the COVID-19 case rates in Tameside are increasing quickly, in part due to the new Delta variant. The Delta variant spreads even more easily and is now the dominant type of coronavirus in Tameside and England.

I am sure that we are all keen to try to stop the spread of the virus in our communities so that our schools can remain open to all children this term.

There are several key things that could really help us to achieve this.

1) Symptoms?

Please remember that any children who have symptoms of Covid-19 should stay away from school and take a PCR test. Symptoms may include a high temperature, a persistent cough or any changes to taste or smell. Book a PCR test here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test-or-ring-119>.

If anyone in your household experiences Covid-19 symptoms, they should isolate and book a PCR test as soon as possible. Please remember that other household members, including children, should also isolate whilst awaiting the results of the test.

2) No symptoms

I urge all adults to take a lateral flow, rapid test as soon as possible. I would then ask that your family do lateral flow testing twice a week. If anyone has a positive result they and all their close contacts need to self-isolate immediately - then the person who has tested positive must book a PCR test.

If your child is unable to attend school because they are a close contact of someone who has tested positive, please let your school know so that they can establish remote learning.

You can get the lateral flow tests from:

- Most pharmacies - details at <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/> , or order them on-line <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests> or by phoning 119

- By visiting our asymptomatic testing site at Dukinfield Town Hall to either do a lateral flow test or pick up some tests to use regularly at home:

<p>Dukinfield Town Hall, Chapel Street entrance King Street, Dukinfield, SK16 4LA</p>	<p>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday Wednesday</p> <p>CLOSED ON BANK HOLIDAYS</p>	<p>Monday 7am - 5pm Tuesday 7am - 12noon Wednesday 7am – 2pm Thursday 7am – 12noon Friday 7am – 5pm</p>
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3) PCR testing of close contacts during their 10-day self-isolation period

Following national guidance, I am asking all **pupils who are identified as a contact of a positive Covid-19 case to access PCR testing**. This will help us to identify and isolate cases, prevent onward transmission and minimise our case rates in the borough.

The PCR test should ideally be taken **early in the 10-day isolation period**. My request also applies to anyone who lives with a pupil who has had a positive test result. Even if your PCR test result is negative, you must continue to self-isolate for the full 10 days in line with government guidance.

You can go online at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test to book a free test by clicking the box that says your local council has asked you to do this. For those without internet access, you can also order or book a test over the phone by calling 119.

If someone has tested positive using a PCR swab test in the last 90 days, they do not need to take another test.

4) Hands/Face/Space/Fresh air

Please continue to encourage your family to wash their hands, wear face coverings, and meet others outdoors. Please wear face coverings and maintain social distance as you bring your children to school and collect them. These continue to be key ways in which we can prevent the virus from spreading.

5) Vaccination

Everyone aged 25 and over, and anyone aged 18 and over with an underlying health condition, or who is a carer, are eligible for their free coronavirus vaccination now. Please take up this offer as soon as possible – you can book: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>. It is vitally important to receive both doses of the vaccine as getting both doses maximises your immunity.

Thank you for all your continued support in helping to keep our community safe.

Kind Regards



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Director of Population Health