



21<sup>st</sup> September 2020

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 off 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