



Midlothian 

Guide to support workplace communications, training and actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and in the event of an outbreak.

School: St David's RC Primary and ELC Setting

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NHS Lothian Board Health Protection Team (HPT) contact details:

Office hours phone number: 0131 465 5420 or 0131 465 5422

Out of hours phone number: 0131 242 100 (Edinburgh Royal switchboard) and ask for Public Health on call.

Email: health.protection@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk



This guide is designed for managers and employees to support workplace communications, training and action to take in the event of a suspected or actual outbreak within a school.

Scottish Government Covid-19 Guidance on preparing for the start of the new school term in August 2020 should be followed at all times to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19, it should be used to support, not replace, discussions with your NHS Board Health Protection Team.



coronavirus-covid-19
-guidance-preparing-

This document aims to answer some of the questions that school staff, parents, young people, and partner services might ask. The above guidance is linked throughout this document, by relevant page number and sections.

Guidance on the prevention of the spread of the virus is included in the Test and Protect section of the SG guidance pages 16 – 20 and the Midlothian Council Operational Guidance pages 19/20.

Recognising its specific context, separate guidance for the [Early Learning and Childcare \(ELC\) and childcare sector](#) has been developed. There is also specific guidance for [childminders](#) and for [“Out of school care”](#). [Guidance for youth work and the Community Learning and Development Sector](#) is also available.

Section 1: Workplace Communications

All pupils, parents or guardians and staff should be aware that the following should be addressed to produce a COVID-safe working environment.

- Consult with **staff**, including trades unions, to ensure **policies and procedures** include COVID-19 risk assessment and mitigations.
- Identify and support those who **should not attend** (e.g. as shielding or other health issues).
- Continue **work from home** policies and provide necessary support to those who can.
- Ensure all **staff are aware of their responsibility** to control the spread of COVID-19 in their workplace.
- Ensure **pupils and staff have access to suitable learning opportunities** in effective hand washing technique, cough etiquette and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Ensure **managers and staff understand their obligations** with respect to Scotland's Test and Protect Strategy. That staff are clear how to access testing as set out in the appendix Section A of this document.
- Ensure **pupils and staff do not congregate** in communal areas such as canteens, arrival and entry areas, staff rooms, wash areas/hygiene stations and corridors.
- Put in place **training** which will ensure that all employees understand the requirements for control measures including physical distancing and measures to monitor adherence by all staff.
- Ensure **all pupils and staff are clear** that those who have symptoms or are diagnosed with COVID-19 and their household/other contacts do not attend work or school and follow advice on self/household isolation.
- Ensure **all staff are clear** that if they become unwell whilst at work they should return home and seek testing.
- Ensure **that staff are clear** on what is expected of them should a pupil or work colleague become unwell on site as set out in the guidance Appendix Sections A & B

Section 2: Actions in the event of a suspected outbreak

Immediate action

If there is **any** suspicion that there may be a cluster of cases in your school, the most important thing you can do is to contact your local **NHS Board Health Protection Team (HPT) promptly**. Do not spend time trying to work out what you should do yourself. Your HPT will be happy to advise you on what to do.

It is very important that the expert HPT be advised as early as possible of a possible problem so they can assess the situation and offer you advice.

When should I suspect an outbreak?

An outbreak should be SUSPECTED if there are:

- two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the setting within 14 days or
- Increase in background rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19

A suspected outbreak should be reported to the local HPT who will undertake a public health risk assessment to determine whether there is an outbreak.

Note that schools with increased rates of respiratory illness should also be alert to the possibility that this could be due to COVID-19 and contact their local HPT for further advice.

How do I contact the local HPT if I suspect an outbreak?

Immediately inform your local NHS board HPT, using the local contact details found here:

NHS Lothian Board Health Protection Team (HPT) contact details:

Office hours phone number: 0131 465 5420 or 0131 465 5422

Out of hours phone number: 0131 242 100 (Edinburgh Royal switchboard) and ask for Public Health on call.

Email: health.protection@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Ensure the school has a nominated point of contact (COVID lead) to liaise with the Health Protection Team

What interventions might be put in place if there is an outbreak in the school?

Your Health Protection Team or Incident Management Team will work with you to identify the appropriate measures. The first step is to review implementation of core standard preventive measures and to ensure that they are in place and effective.

What else may I need to do?

The Health Protection Team or Incident Management Team will declare when the outbreak is over.

Managing attendance and absence

All children, young people and staff must be made aware that they must inform a member of staff or responsible person if they feel unwell with symptoms of COVID-19.

Schools should consider how they can reinforce children and young people's understanding of the symptoms as well as good hygiene practices. This must be balanced against the need to reassure children and young people they are safe in school, and developing an open culture where it is safe and comfortable to disclose symptoms without fear of stigma or blame.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A new, continuous cough
- A fever/ high temperature
- A change or loss in taste and/or smell (anosmia).

It is essential that people do not attend school if symptomatic, but instead self-isolate (along with their household) and follow guidance on NHS inform and from Test and Protect.

It is also essential that **anyone** identified as a contact of someone who tests positive for coronavirus must not attend school and should self-isolate for 14 days.

1. Someone in the class/school is symptomatic or tests positive, what next?

All schools will have a **COVID-19 risk assessment** in place, and will have support from the local authority and health protection team as required. The Test and Protect process will ensure anyone who is a contact of a confirmed case will be notified and advised.

If there is an outbreak at a school, or multiple people with symptoms, an incident management team meeting will be called to risk assess and plan next steps.

See the Lothian **Coronavirus toolkit** for schools, included as **Appendix 1**.

2. Will all parents/carers and children/young people be notified if someone in the school/class is symptomatic or tests positive for COVID-19?

Those who have been in contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be contacted by the Test and Protect service so they can isolate and protect others from further spread of the virus. If there is an outbreak at school parents/carers and children/young people will be given the

necessary information as soon as appropriate steps are agreed with the school, the local authority and public health.

Confidentiality is essential: no names will be shared with parents/carers, children and young people, and staff who do not need to know. The standard Test and Protect processes will ascertain any close contacts and make any necessary phone calls, without disclosing the name of the person who has tested positive.

All parties should be discouraged from speculating and encouraged to maintain an open, safe culture where there is no fear or stigma associated with developing symptoms or testing positive.

3. If a child, young person or staff member calls in sick or is sent home with COVID symptoms, must they remain off school for at least 10 days?

Test and Protect is Scotland's approach to preventing the spread of coronavirus. Anyone experiencing a new, continuous cough, a fever/high temperature, and/or a change or loss in taste and/or smell should self-isolate (with their household) and get tested.

Lots of other illnesses have some symptoms similar to COVID-19. Without a test, anyone experiencing those symptoms should self-isolate for at least 10 days (and 14 days for their household). They can only come out of isolation once the 10 days have passed, and only then if their symptoms have improved and they have been without a fever for at least 48 hours. Acting early and getting tested means that, should they test negative, they can come out of isolation once their symptoms improve and they feel well enough to do so.

If someone is experiencing other symptoms e.g. blocked/runny nose, headache, sore throat, etc., but **not** including any of the classic COVID-related symptoms, they should stay off school until their symptoms have improved and they feel well, but there is no need to self-isolate for 10 days, no need for their household to isolate, and no need to get tested for COVID-19.

4. If a child or young person's parent/carer tests positive (or has COVID symptoms) must the child stay off school for 14 days?

Yes. This guidance has not changed, and all household members must self-isolate for 14 days if anyone in their household develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19. Children and young people may be less likely to contract COVID-19 themselves, but we do not know how likely they are to play a part in spreading it.

5. If someone is isolating with COVID-19, do they need to get a negative test before they can return to school?

No, the test picks up traces of virus in the nose and throat, and in some cases those traces will remain once a person has recovered and is no longer infectious. So **a repeat test, following a positive result, is not helpful.** The important thing is to self-isolate and get tested as soon as any classic COVID symptoms develop (cough/ fever/ change or loss in smell/taste) and, if the test is

positive, to stay isolated for at least 10 days (14 days for any household members) and only come out of isolation once symptoms have improved and there has been no fever for at least 48 hours.

6. If there is an outbreak in a class/school will everyone be tested? Will everyone be sent home?

If schools have two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 within 14 days, or an increase in background rate of absence due to suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19, they may have an outbreak.

If an outbreak is confirmed an incident management team meeting will be arranged with the local health protection team who will undertake a risk assessment and work with the school and local authority to plan next steps. Any plans for wider testing will be dependent on particular circumstances. The same applies to any closures or whether any groups will be sent home. Parents/carers and children/young people, and wider school staff, will be informed as required once decisions and next steps are agreed.

7. Will the school be closed in an outbreak?

Any decisions about closing a school will be taken in partnership between the school, the local authority and the health protection team, following a risk assessment based on the number and distribution of cases. Such decisions will not be taken lightly, and only where it is deemed necessary to keep people safe and help stop the spread of COVID. Information about individual cases will not be shared with parents/carers, children and young people, or wider staff groups. *P20, section 109*

8. Will a test show if someone has had COVID-19 in the past?

The test for COVID-19 is a nose and throat swab test. It will only show if there is virus present at the time of testing. It will not be able to tell if someone has had the infection in the past – that would require a blood test which is not currently available.

9. Further questions?

If you are a parent/carers or a young person please get in touch with your school in the first instance.

If you are a school staff member please speak to the local authority in the first instance, who can escalate any concerns to the health protection team.

Appendix 1 Guidance: Responding to coronavirus in a school setting

This guidance details the measures that should be taken in response to a single case or outbreak of Coronavirus amongst staff and children. A COVID-19 outbreak is normally defined as two linked cases of a disease within a specific setting over a period of 14 days.

The objective for staff is to minimise the spread of infection by using the toolkit to prepare and rehearse using scenarios and guidance provided.

Information is included on how the response to a suspected or actual Coronavirus outbreak should be managed and the support available.

The Health Protection Team (HPT) at NHS Lothian will be involved in providing advice and support to Headteachers and Establishment Managers during an outbreak or a single case.

Coronavirus information

What is coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?

The disease COVID-19 is caused by a new strain of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that was first identified in Wuhan City, China in December 2019. Symptoms range from mild to moderate illness to pneumonia or severe acute respiratory infection requiring hospital care. COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 12 March 2020.

What are the typical signs and symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms are:

- new continuous cough and/or
- fever/high temperature and/or
- loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste.

For most people the symptoms of COVID-19 will be mild. Some people, however, will have more serious symptoms, including pneumonia or difficulty breathing, which might require admission to hospital.

How is coronavirus spread?

There are two routes by which COVID-19 can be spread:

- Directly: from close contact with an infected person (within 2 metres) where respiratory secretions can enter the eyes, mouth, nose or airways. This risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.
- Indirectly: by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching own mouth, nose or eyes. Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

How can spread be prevented?

A range of public health measures have been used to control transmission of SARS-CoV-2, including physical distancing, shielding advice, and infection, prevention and control measures (e.g. hand hygiene). As part of the gradual relaxation of lockdown measures the Test and Protect programme, which includes contact tracing, is being implemented to allow a sustained reduction in new cases, outbreaks and to reduce transmission.

Staff, parents, visitors or children **should not** go to school if they:

- have developed COVID-19 symptoms or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or
- are from the same household as someone who has symptoms of COVID-19 or has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or
- have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19.

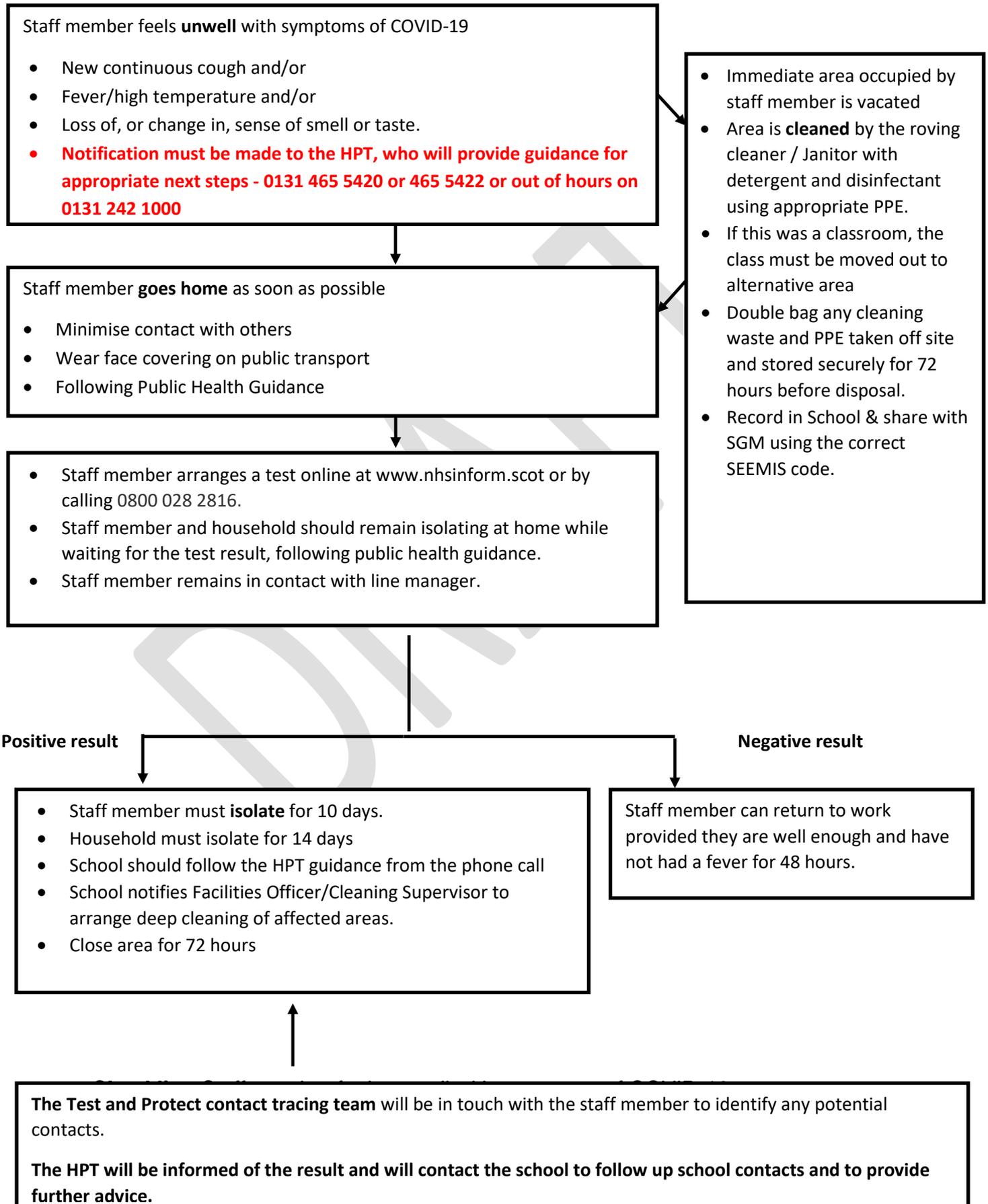
A close contact is someone who has been physically close enough to the confirmed case for a long enough period of time, that they may have had the virus transmitted to them. Close contacts will be informed of this by the Test and Protect contact tracing team.

The local HPT will be notified of any positive case in complex settings (e.g. schools, nurseries) and will be in touch to offer support and advice to the establishment.

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What to do if someone develops symptoms

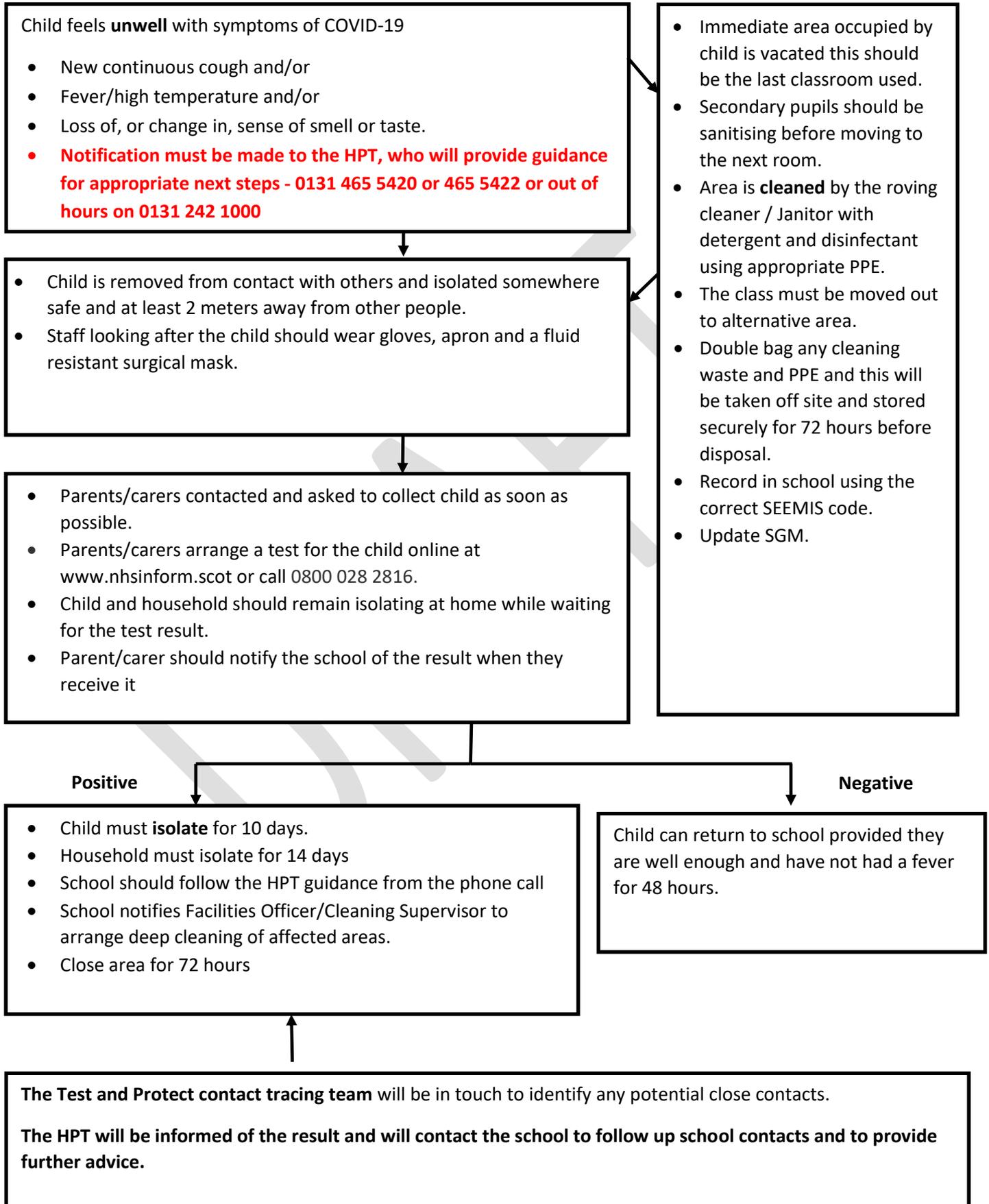
Section A: Staff member feels unwell with symptoms of COVID-19



Section A: Staff member feels unwell with symptoms of COVID-19

Actions to be taken	Complete Y/N
<p>Staff member should go home as soon as possible, minimising contact with others.</p> <p>If using public transport a face covering must be worn in line with Scottish Government guidance.</p>	
<p>Staff member should arrange a test via NHS Inform (online at www.nhsinform.scot or call 0800 028 2816.)</p> <p>Results are sent by text to the staff member within 48 hours. Staff member should inform their manager of the result once they have received it.</p>	
<p>The immediate area occupied by the staff member e.g. desk, telephone, door handles should be cleaned with detergent to remove organic matter, then a disinfectant to kill pathogens.</p> <p>Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfection should be undertaken using disposable cloths. All waste items (e.g. PPE, cloths) should be double bagged and stored securely for 72 hours before disposal.</p>	
<p>Individuals who have had any contact with the staff member should wash their hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds and remain vigilant regarding developing symptoms of COVID-19.</p>	

Section B: Child feels unwell with symptoms of COVID-19



Child feels unwell with symptoms of COVID-19

Actions to be taken	Complete Y/N
<p>The affected child should be isolated somewhere safe and at least 2 metres away from other people.</p> <p>If possible, the door should be closed with appropriate adult supervision and a window could be open for ventilation. Where possible, a separate bathroom should be designated for the individual to use.</p> <p>If 2 metre distance cannot be maintained then adult should wear PPE (gloves, apron and fluid-resistant surgical mask).</p>	
<p>The child should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze, and then put the tissue in the bin.</p> <p>If no bin is available, put the tissue in a bag or their pocket for disposing in a bin later. If you don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.</p>	
<p>Parents/carers of children that are ill whilst at school should be contacted and requested that they come to collect their child as soon as possible. The person collecting the child should be a non-vulnerable (to COVID-19) adult member of their household.</p> <p>They should contact NHS Inform immediately to arrange a test for the child. Results are sent by text within 48 hours.</p> <p>The parent/carer of the child should notify the school of the result as soon as possible.</p>	
<p>If the affected person has mild symptoms and is over the age of 16 they should go home as soon as possible minimising contact with others where possible.</p> <p>If using public transport a face covering must be worn in line with Scottish Government advice.</p> <p>They should contact NHS Inform immediately to arrange a test.</p>	

<p>The immediate area occupied by the child should be cleaned with detergent to remove organic matter then a disinfectant to kill pathogens.</p> <p>Gloves and aprons should be used when cleaning the areas where a person suspected of having COVID-19 has been.</p> <p>Cleaning and disinfection should be undertaken using disposable cloths. All waste items (e.g. PPE, cloths) should be double bagged and stored securely for 72 hours before disposal. These will be taken off site by the cleaner/janitor.</p>	
<p>Individuals who have had any contact with the child should wash their hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds and remain vigilant regarding developing symptoms of COVID-19.</p>	

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Section C: Actions following results of test

If a staff member, child or young person **tests negative** they can return to school provided they are well enough (according to the school's sickness policy) and have not had a fever for 48 hours.

If a staff member, child or young person **tests positive** they will be required to isolate at home for 10 days. Household contacts must isolate for 14 days. Other close contacts will be identified via the Test and Protect process and will be contacted by the contact tracing service. The HPT will be informed of any positive result in a child or staff member **after** the contact tracing service has identified where the positive cases work or attend school.

As this process can take time the school may be informed of the positive result before the HPT is aware. The HPT would therefore encourage the Headteacher or Business Manager to contact them as soon as possible on the phone numbers below if they are notified of a positive result.

The HPT may instigate an Incident Management Team to provide further advice and actions to the school.

The HPT should also be contacted if there is a general increase in respiratory illness in the school as per routine procedure.

Health Protection contact details

Office hours phone number: 0131 465 5420 / 5422

Out of hours phone number: 0131 242 100 (Edinburgh Royal switchboard)
Ask for Public Health on Call

Email: health.protection@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk