



*Health Protection Duty Room*

*Public Health Agency*

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*Website:- [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)*

03/07/2021

St Catherine's Primary School

### **CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 IN St Catherine's Primary School**

The Public Health Agency has been notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19 associated with St Catherine's Primary School. The Public Health Agency has worked with the school principal to undertake a risk assessment and has identified you as a **close contact**, which occurred on 30<sup>th</sup> June.

#### **Advice to self-isolate and arrange a COVID test**

In line with national guidance, you should **stay at home and self-isolate** for 10 days from the last contact with the case, which is up to and including **9<sup>th</sup> July**.

You must not go to school or any public areas during this time: you must remain at home.

We now recommend that you **arrange a free PCR test** as soon as possible – even if you do not have any symptoms. You can book a test online at [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) or by phoning 119. When you are booking the PCR test online, under the section 'why are you asking for a test', please select 'I have been told by contact tracers to get a test.' When asked for a code, please enter 220367031. We are asking you to enter the code as it helps us monitor and assess COVID clusters when they occur. While you should still be able to book a test even if you do not enter the code, it helps us if you do.

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 you can leave home during the self-isolation period. However, you should not use public transport.

Provided you and everyone else in the household have no COVID-19 symptoms, the remainder of the household can carry on with their normal activities. If you are well and have already had a positive PCR COVID test within the previous 90 days we do not advise testing. This is because PCR tests can continue to find non-infectious parts of the virus for several weeks.

### PCR test results for contacts

The reason for PCR testing of contacts is to find other positive cases as quickly as we can. However this early testing can miss cases who have caught the virus but are not yet infectious – so **even if the PCR test is negative you should still complete the original 10 days isolation.**

#### **If the test is positive:**

A new period of self-isolation will begin, for 10 days from the date of the test. **Everyone in your household must now stay at home and isolate – even if you have no symptoms.** You will be contacted by the PHA contact tracing service who will identify other contacts and provide you with advice about what to do next. If you are well at the end of the period of self-isolation, then you can return to usual activities.

#### **If the test is negative:**

You should still complete the 10 days self-isolation period.

**But if you go on to develop symptoms then you will need another PCR test** and everyone in the household should isolate from the symptoms start until you get the result.

## What to do if you develop symptoms of COVID 19

For most people, especially children, COVID-19 will be a mild illness.

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)

If you develop any of these symptoms, and have not already tested positive for COVID-19, you should remain at home and arrangements made for you to be tested - [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test). You should arrange a test even if you were tested before and that test was negative.

At that time all other household members must also stay at home, not go to work, school or public areas, even for exercise.

## 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:

- 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

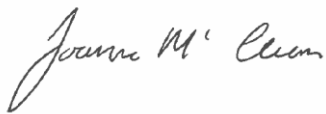
## Further information

For further information, please see the Public Health Agency website <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus> or contact NHS 111. If you feel unwell and you are worried about your symptoms or about anyone else in the home, please contact your GP.

I know that staying at home for a prolonged period of time may be hard but it is vital to help reduce the risk of transmission in the community.

Your support is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joanne M. McClean". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'M'.

Dr Joanne McClean

Consultant in Public Health Medicine