

**CORONAVIRUS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
ISSUE NO. 8 - UPDATED 14 APRIL 2020**

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION	4
2. CORONAVIRUS – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	4-8
2.1. What is coronavirus	
2.2. What are the signs and symptoms of coronavirus?	
2.3. How does COVID 19 coronavirus spread?	
2.4. What can we do to reduce the risk of catching coronavirus?	
2.5. Employees who are identified as either having COVID-19 or start showing symptoms of the virus	
2.6. Employees who are living in households with someone who shows symptoms that may be caused by coronavirus	
2.7. Employees who inform they wish to remain at home who are not experiencing the symptoms?	
2.8. Should employees be concerned about handling post, packages or food from affected areas?	
2.9. I am a Healthcare Worker (HCW) and have come into contact with a patient with COVID-19, what action should I take?	
2.10. What should employees do where their role includes contact with residents / customers etc.?	
2.11. Should there be additional cleaning of offices, work spaces?	
3. SELF ISOLATION AND SOCIAL DISTANCING	8-10
3.1. Employees who are pregnant, under 70 with an underlying health condition or aged 70 or older	
3.2. Employees who have a significant health condition	
3.3. Shielding and how to protect vulnerable people	
3.4. Travel advice and self-isolation	
4. SCHOOL, NUSERY / CHILDCARE CLOSURES	10-13
4.1. Employees who are parents/carers who are off work because their child's school, nursery, childcare or other educational setting has closed due to coronavirus	
4.2. Which employees are included as critical workers and where required from the setting what evidence is available?	
4.3. How should I go about identifying staff to attend work for the two week Easter holiday period?	
4.4. Induction for Newly Qualified Teacher Guidance	
4.5. Is there a list of nursery or childminder places available for key worker employees who need to continue to work but require childcare due to the closure of the usual childcare / nursery setting?	
4.6. Protection and cleanliness in schools and childcare settings	
5. WORKING FROM HOME AND TRAVEL TO, FROM OR FOR WORK	13-17
5.1. Do employees need to work from home?	
5.2. Key workers who need to travel to, from or for work	
5.3. A member of staff relies on public transport to get to and from work, how will this impact on my ability to get to work if I am not able to work from home?	
5.4. Is there accommodation available for employees who could continue to work but are no longer able to stay at home?	

- 5.5 I have employees who are currently absent from work e.g. due to sickness, maternity, adoption, parental or career break leave who will be returning to work imminently to different working arrangements what do I need to do?
- 5.6. Is there any additional equipment available for employees who are now working from home and how can this be delivered?
- 5.7. My service is homeworking but we have a significant number of meetings and contact – how do I decide what is ‘essential’ and what isn’t?
- 5.8. Employees who cannot undertake their role working from home
- 5.9. Should my apprentice continue with their apprenticeship during this time?
- 5.10. Employees on probation guidance
- 5.11. Newly Qualified Social Workers
- 5.12. Annual Development Review (ADR)
- 5.13. Free Metrolink travel for essential journeys by NHS and Social Care staff
- 6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING 17-18**
- 6.1. What advice is available about social distancing and its impact upon the health and wellbeing for employees? What mechanisms are available to remain connected with colleagues?
- 6.2. Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health First Aiders
- 7. PAY, ANNUAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS 18-22**
- 7.1. How will pay be affected during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?
- 7.2. Where an employee’s forthcoming holiday has been cancelled can they cancel their annual leave or carry forward the annual leave into their next leave year?
- 7.3. What will happen to car park pass deductions from salary during the COVID-19 outbreak as many employees no longer need them?
- 7.4. I pay for childcare vouchers via my salary - can I change the amount of my childcare vouchers?
- 7.5. What shall be claimed where employees undertake any work related journeys?
- 7.6. I am contracted to work Bank Holidays (BH) and will be required to work as normal on Bank Holidays during COVID-19.
- 7.7. I am not normally contracted to work Bank Holidays (BH) but have been asked to in order to support a critical service as part of the COVID-19 response.
- 7.8. The use of casual workers and pay guidance
- 8. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND RECORDING 22-24**
- 8.1. What should be recorded for instances of self-isolation/sickness absence relating to coronavirus?
- 8.2. An employee is currently unable to return to work due to being unable to return to the UK how should I record their absence?
- 8.3. Will I be expected to continue to manage staff absence through the normal managing attendance process?
- 8.4. The requirement to report cases of employee related COVID-19 to the HSE under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)
- 8.5. Do risk assessments for my teams work activities have to include the appropriate control measures needed for COVID-19?
- 9. RECRUITMENT AND AGENCY WORKERS 24-26**
- 9.1. I am currently recruiting or am planning to recruit to a vacant post. Can this continue in light of the coronavirus?
- 9.2. Can agency workers continue to be engaged by the organisation during the COVID-19 outbreak?
- 9.3. Should schools continue to pay supply teachers and other contingent workers?
- 9.4. Roles that require a DBS check
- 9.5. Carrying our right to work checks during the coronavirus pandemic

9.6. Can an individual who is on furlough leave from an external employer, under the Government Job Retention Scheme, work for the Council, CCG or school?

10. REDEPLOYMENT / VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT CRITICAL SERVICES 26-27

10.1. Can employees be asked to work at different work locations or undertake different job roles?

10.2. What will I be paid if I am redeployed to support critical / frontline services?

10.3. I am not classed as a key worker and would like to volunteer to be re-deployed what do I need to do?

10.4. Family members and friends of employees who wish to volunteer

10.5. Can I volunteer to go and work for other organisations and/or community groups?

10.6. Who will employees report to when supporting other areas of work?

FIRST EDITION 5 MARCH 2020

(Updated 10 March 2020)

(Updated 16 March 2020)

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE SELF ISOLATION AND SOCIAL DISTANCING (19 March 2020)

(Updated 24 March 2020)

(First edition and additional guidance now and all future versions to be combined updated 30 March 2020)

(Updated 6 April 2020)

This version (14 April 2020)

These FAQs have been developed from FAQs featured on Public Health information and Local Government Association information regarding COVID-19, as well as questions from Head teachers / Managers at the Council, CCG and Schools.

All information contained in this circular is correct at time of publication but all links to external government websites should be checked regularly as official advice is likely to be updated as the situation continues to develop.

Senior Managers / Head teachers will be responsible for providing specific service / school based advice to employees.

1. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

- 1.1.** National guidance about COVID-19, including links to guidance surrounding foreign travel, can be found through the following link, which is updated daily: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>
- 1.2.** Information and advice is also available via [Public Health England](#) and the [NHS website](#).
- 1.3.** The Government's announcement on the 23 March 2020 asked, where possible, that people stay at home:
 - Only go outside for food, health reasons or essential work
 - Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
 - Wash your hands as soon as you get home

2. CORONAVIRUS – SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

2.1. What is coronavirus?

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone confirmed with coronavirus, they have not been infected.

2.2. What are the signs and symptoms of coronavirus?

The symptoms of this new coronavirus (now known as COVID-19) include fever and respiratory symptoms including coughing, sneezing and shortness of breath. Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

2.3. How does COVID 19 coronavirus spread?

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Respiratory secretions produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes containing the virus are most likely to be the main means of transmission.

There are 2 main routes by which people can spread COVID-19:

- Infection can be spread to people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or possibly could be inhaled into the lungs.
- It is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface, object or the hand of an infected person that has been contaminated with respiratory

secretions and then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching door knob or shaking hands then touching their own face).

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors; for example:

- what surface the virus is on
- whether it is exposed to sunlight
- differences in temperature and humidity
- exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours.

We know that similar viruses are transferred to and by people's hands. Therefore regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection. See hand washing guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866065/Handwashing_techniques.pdf

2.4. What can we do to reduce the risk of catching coronavirus?

Government guidance for employers and businesses provides a number of advisory steps for employers to help them protect their workforce. The organisation has, and will continue to take the necessary measures in line with the guidance. Managers / Head teachers will need to ensure appropriate measures, where necessary.

The latest NHS advice is available online:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

The full government guidance is accessible here: is accessible:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

There are things everyone can do to help stop germs like coronavirus spreading:

- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are unwell.

In addition to the above, the Government is now advising that you should stay at home where possible and socially distance yourself to avoid unnecessary contact with others.

Full details and guidance can be found using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

With the updated new rules from 23 March 2020:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874742/Full_guidance_on_staying_at_home_and_away_from_others_1.pdf

Social distancing is a crucial measure to reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

2.5. Employees who are identified as either having COVID-19 or start showing symptoms of the virus

Any employee diagnosed with, or suspected of having COVID-19 will need to remain isolated from the community and not come to work (self-isolate) in line with government guidelines on staying at home available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

If symptoms start to present at work the employee must notify their head teacher / manager and go home immediately. For the protection of themselves and colleagues, employees cannot remain in the workplace.

Depending on how poorly they are and the type of role they have, the individual may be able to work flexibly from home during the self-isolation period. If the individual's job role does not allow them to work at home, during the self-isolation period they may be able to undertake other duties at home to ensure that key operational services and support is provided to our vulnerable residents. For further advice please consult your senior manager / Head teacher or HR Consultant.

Where the employee is not well enough to work, the absence should be treated as sickness. You will need to notify payroll via your normal absence return and state one of the reasons for sickness absence as outlined in question 25 below.

2.6. Employees who are living in households with someone who shows symptoms that may be caused by coronavirus

If an employee lives with someone who has symptoms of or may have COVID-19, they will be required to self-isolate in line with the current government guidance available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.

The employee should follow the government guidance provided to ensure they minimise the risk of contracting the virus:

- minimise the time spent in shared spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas as much as possible
- keep shared spaces well ventilated
- aim to keep 2 metres (3 steps) away from the person and sleep in a different bed where possible
- use separate bathroom facilities and separate towels if possible and ensure that these are cleaned after use

2.7. Employees who inform they wish to remain at home who are not experiencing the symptoms?

The UK Government has advised of social distancing measures. There is no requirement for the employee to self-isolate if they or someone in their household does **not** have symptoms of coronavirus however social distancing measures are steps that can be taken to reduce the social interaction between people.

Further information, advice and guidance can be found on the [UK Government Website](#)

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. They are:

1. Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
2. Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible
3. Work from home, where possible.
4. Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces
5. Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media

6. Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

If the employee is well, i.e. has no symptoms of coronavirus, where possible and their job role permits, they should work from home for the foreseeable future. It is recognised that not all employees are able to work from home due to the nature of their job role. In circumstances where an employee has concerns about attending work but is not experiencing symptoms or living with someone with symptoms in their household, you must discuss their concerns so that they can be supported further.

In circumstances where an employee has concerns about attending work but is not experiencing symptoms or living with someone with symptoms in their household, their concerns should be discussed with their manager / head teacher so that they can be supported further.

2.8. Should employees be concerned about handling post, packages or food from affected areas?

Employees should continue to follow existing risk assessments and safe systems of work. There is no perceived increase in risk for handling post from specified areas.

2.9. I am a Healthcare Worker (HCW) and have come into contact with a patient with COVID-19, what action should I take?

HCWs i.e. nurses that come into contact with a COVID-19 patient while not wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) can remain at work. This is because in most instances this will be a short-lived exposure, unlike exposure in a household setting that is ongoing.

HCWs should ensure they are wearing their personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times whilst at work and undertaking their duties.

If a HCW displays the symptoms of COVID-19 they should inform their manager immediately and self-isolate.

Symptomatic staff can return to work:

- on day 8 after the onset of symptoms if clinical improvement has occurred and they have been afebrile (not feverish) for 2 days
- if a cough is the only persistent symptom on day 8, they can return to work (post-viral cough is known to persist for several weeks in some cases)

The requirements for the social care workforce are set out by the government under [Guidance on Home Care Provision](#)

2.10. What should employees do where their role includes contact with residents / customers etc.?

The Council and CCG Senior Management Team have determined which services are required to stay open and which will begin to operate differently. Your Senior Manager / Head teacher will be in touch to communicate to you what this means for your service. The underlying principles are that unless absolutely necessary to critical service operation, face to face meetings should be avoided and postponed, or replaced via skype or conference call facilities to mitigate spread of the virus.

Where essential contact is necessary as directed by your senior management e.g. social care home visits, children's residential care, the appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work should be maintained and any additional health and hygiene measure put in place to ensure the health and safety of our colleagues and residents is supported.

2.11. Should there be additional cleaning of offices, work spaces?

Normal cleaning regimes continue to be necessary in accordance with workplace legislation and practice to ensure that our working environment is clean and hygienic. Our facilities management provider has put in place additional appropriate measures to support workplace hygiene.

3. SELF ISOLATION AND SOCIAL DISTANCING

3.1. Employees who are pregnant, under 70 with an underlying health condition or aged 70 or older

The following groups have been strongly advised that they should take social distancing additional measures to keep themselves safe. These groups include those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds) or complex health condition
- are pregnant.

The Government's guidance is changing on a daily basis and you and your employees are encouraged to keep up to date with this information regularly.

The Government guidance is accessible here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

In practice, individuals who are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant, are not being advised to self-isolate by the Government but to ensure that they are stringent around social distancing. In these circumstances, every opportunity to enable the person to work from home should be made. Where the job role undertaken cannot be undertaken at home, they may be deployed to undertake other activities at home or at an alternative workplace to enable key services and functions to be undertaken.

Where a pregnant employee is absent from work due to medical reasons and this continues into the fourth week before the expected week of childbirth, or the employee is ill after the start of the fourth week, this will trigger the commencement of maternity leave, in accordance with the organisation's maternity scheme.

Where alternative working arrangements are unavailable a full risk assessment should be undertaken in consultation with the employee. Please document your assessment using your normal risk assessment form or the updated document:

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/collectiveagreements/council/hs/riskassessments/covid19>

For further advice speak to your Senior Manager / Head teacher / HR Consultant.

3.2. Employees who have a significant health condition

The Government currently advises that employees with increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus should be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. The guidance is accessible here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

The Government's guidance is changing on a daily basis and managers / head teachers and the employee are encouraged to keep up to date with this information regularly.

In practice, employees at risk of severe illness from coronavirus are not being advised to self-isolate by the Government but to ensure that they are stringent around social distancing. In these circumstances, every opportunity to enable the person to work from home should be made. Where the job role undertaken by the employee cannot be undertaken at home, they may be deployed to undertake other activities at home or at an alternative workplace to enable key services and functions to be undertaken.

Where alternative working arrangements are unavailable a full risk assessment should be undertaken in consultation with the employee. Please document your assessment using your normal risk assessment form or the updated document:

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/collectiveagreements/council/hs/riskassessments/covid19>

There are some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. If you are in this category, you are required to follow more stringent measures and will have received a shielding letter.

3.3. Shielding and how to protect vulnerable people

It should be noted that the Government has identified some clinical conditions which put people at even higher risk of illness from coronavirus. If you have a serious underlying health condition, you are at very high risk of severe illness as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) requiring admission to hospital.

Shielding is a practice used to protect extremely vulnerable people from coming into contact with coronavirus.

You are strongly advised to stay at home at all times and avoid any face-to-face contact for a period of at least 12 weeks from the day you receive your letter. Please note that this period of time could change.

People who will be notified that they are to shield have been given advice to give to people who may visit the house and will be encouraged to draw on support they might have through your friends, family and other networks during this time to keep in touch with people over the phone, by post, or online.

The Government guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 are:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Where an employee receives notification from the government that they or their child/family member falls within the extremely vulnerable group they will need to follow the government guidelines immediately.

Any employee falling within this category will be contacted directly by NHS England and provided with advice on more stringent measures that will need to be taken to keep them safe. These individuals should rigorously follow the shielding advice in full.

Individuals will need to inform their manager and provide a copy of the correspondence to confirm they fall into this group.

Employees should also inform their manager where a member in the household has received a letter and further support is required to continue to undertake their role e.g. accommodation to continue to work with individuals who are symptomatic.

If you have an employee who fall within this category and need further advice you should contact your Senior Manager / Head teacher / HR Consultant.

3.4. Travel advice and self-isolation

The UK Government has withdrawn (on 13th March 2020) the advice which was previously available for those travellers entering the UK from a list of specified countries (which were split into category 1 and 2).

The advice has been replaced with advice that if you or someone in your household has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) you must self-isolate. Any employee diagnosed with, or suspected of having coronavirus COVID-19 will need to remain isolated from the community and not come to work (self-isolate) in line with government guidelines on staying at home available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

If an employee or someone in their household do not have symptoms of coronavirus and are therefore not required to self-isolate, unless the employee has specifically been advised to do so by their GP or NHS 111, they can return to work.

4. SCHOOL, NUSERY / CHILDCARE CLOSURES

4.1. Employees who are parents/carers who are off work because their child's school, nursery, childcare or other educational setting has closed due to coronavirus

All schools, nurseries or other educational settings are closed for the majority of children from Monday 23 March 2020. Special opening arrangements are in place from Monday 23 March 2020 for the children of key workers and those classed as vulnerable pupils entitled to specialist support. The changes cover children at registered childcare providers (including nurseries and childminders), primary and secondary schools and further education colleges. This is for both state-funded and independent schools.

The government has asked parents/carers to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for children who absolutely need to attend.

Children of critical workers and vulnerable children can continue to attend a setting so parents working in critical sectors can continue working however, in critical sectors it is important where able parents ensure their child is kept at home. Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be.

In these unprecedented circumstances we need to be flexible and support our employees to balance all of their responsibilities both at home and at work. Employees should speak to their line manager about what they are able to do and to think of flexible and creative ways to manage work and childcare demands. Temporary flexible working arrangements may be considered such as homeworking; adapting working patterns; utilising annual leave and flexi time.

There is a statutory right to unpaid time off to deal with emergency situations involving dependants, but this does not provide the right to take extended leave - only reasonable time to deal with immediate situation. Employees are not generally expected to work from home while caring for a dependant. However, during the Coronavirus outbreak, you should discuss with your employees whether it is feasible for them to work flexibly from home. Wherever possible we would ask that people fulfil their full contracted hours. However, this is not going to be possible in all cases and managers need to work with their teams to find flexible solutions to maximise the outputs from their team.

There may be other activities across the Council, CCG and schools that your employee can do whilst caring for their child. Please seek advice from your HR Consultant in these cases. Where staff are asked to work flexibly to cover other jobs (for example through redeployment, and potentially redeployment to another school or Council/CCG service) roles must be clearly explained, and employees should receive appropriate training and a health and safety risk assessment must be carried out if required for the role before they start and the appropriate personal protective equipment provided.

Risk assessments should be undertaken in consultation with the employee. Please document your assessment using your normal risk assessment form or the updated document:

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/collectiveagreements/council/hs/riskassessments/covid19>

The Government website provides information for parents and carers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

4.2. Which employees are included as critical workers and where required from the setting what evidence is available?

The link below provides the Government advice detailing specific details of critical workers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

The following list of Key Workers has been deemed critical sector roles:

- Health and Social Care i.e. Social Workers, Care Workers, Frontline health care
- Education and Childcare i.e. Teachers, Specialist Education Officers
- Key Public Services i.e. Youth Justice Workers, Communication Officers, Registrars, Bereavement Services
- Local and National Government (essential public services) i.e. benefit payments, waste services, housing
- Food and Other Necessary Goods (food production, processing and sale)
- Public Safety and National Security i.e. police and support staff, fire and rescue and security officers
- Transport i.e. School and Community Transport, Transport Infrastructure Officers / Engineer

In the event an employee's educational setting requires confirmation that they have been determined as a key worker they will need to complete the online survey <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TamesideKeyworkerSurvey> to request confirmation they meet the government guidelines.

Subject to meeting the key worker definition, an employee can be issued with a letter to confirm they are undertaking essential work to the COVID-19 response, which can then be used to support them to arrange appropriate care at the educational setting for their child/children.

4.3. How should I go about identifying staff to attend work for the two week Easter holiday period?

The majority of schools have already undertaken contingency planning for this scenario and put in place a rota arrangement covering a number of weeks, enabling staff to identify when they are required to physically attend the school premises. It is recommended you continue with the development of these rota arrangements, in particular seeking volunteers for the bank holidays, and that staff get two weeks off, either before, during or after the period when the school would normally be closed for Easter. Having time off in weekly periods rather than as individual days will offer significant benefits in protecting staff health. It might

also be helpful for staff to know when their colleagues are actually taking their two weeks off.

It is recognised that the use of rotas may pose some particular challenges in special schools where higher staff ratios are required, however it is suggested you still try to take a similar overall approach to the use of rotas wherever possible.

When determining the mix of staff working across your rota arrangements covering the Easter holiday period it would be expected that your normal health and safety risk assessments be reviewed, particularly around fire/emergency evacuation/first aid and your normal safeguarding processes and procedures remain in place. In addition I wish to remind you of the COVID-19 Schools Remaining Open Risk Assessment distributed on Tuesday 24 March 2020 and the DSL and School Safeguarding Arrangements - COVID19 Guidance for Schools distributed on Friday 27 March 2020.

4.4. Induction for Newly Qualified Teacher Guidance

Current arrangements state that ad-hoc absences totalling 30 days or more automatically extends induction by the aggregate number of days absent. However, the government have advised that they intend to amend the regulations to ensure that any absence related to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including school closures, sickness or self-isolation, will not count towards this limit. This means that NQTs who are currently undertaking statutory induction can complete their induction this academic year (2019/2020) as expected, provided they meet the Teachers' Standards.

Head teachers and appropriate bodies should continue to judge whether a NQT has met the Teachers' Standards upon completion of the induction period, which for most, will be the end of the academic year.

If there are concerns that a NQT has not achieved the standards by the end of their induction period, it is strongly encouraged that head teachers and appropriate bodies exercise their discretion to recommend an extension, allowing the NQT further time and opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standards.

The government advice to keep updated on the guidance is accessible here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers/covid-19-induction-for-newly-qualified-teachers-guidance>

4.5. Is there a list of nursery or childminder places available for key worker employees who need to continue to work but require childcare due to the closure of the usual childcare / nursery setting?

If an employee needs to arrange alternative childcare arrangements for a temporary period they should contact Paula Dowd at the Tameside Family Information Service – 0161 342 5434 or via email paula.dowd@tameside.gov.uk to discuss the alternative childcare arrangements available.

4.6. Protection and cleanliness in schools and childcare settings

The scientific advice indicates that educational staff do not require personal protective equipment (PPE). This is needed by medical and care professionals providing specific close contact care, or procedures that create airborne risk, such as suctioning and physiotherapy, for anyone who has coronavirus (COVID-19), and is displaying symptoms.

Individuals not providing this care to someone with the virus, and displaying symptoms, do not need PPE. Asymptomatic people (people with the virus but not displaying symptoms) have a reduced viral load and so risk of transmission is considerably reduced.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air. They quickly fall on floors or surfaces. The advice for schools, colleges and childcare settings is to follow steps on [social distancing, handwashing and other hygiene measures](#), and [cleaning](#) of surfaces.

Some children, and young people with special educational needs, may be unable to follow social distancing guidelines, or require personal care support. In these circumstances, individuals need to increase their level of self-protection, such as reducing close contact (where appropriate), cleaning frequently touched surfaces, and carrying out more frequent handwashing.

Additional advice for settings caring for children and young people with complex needs will be provided through the Education Service.

Childcare practitioners do not need PPE. They should care for children as normal, although increasing the frequency of handwashing (and always doing so before and after, for example, feeding children or changing nappies) and cleaning of surfaces and toys. Soft toys should not be shared between children. If a child displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), they should not come to the setting, or should be sent home with their parents / carers if symptoms arise during the day. Staff should clean as normal after this.

5. WORKING FROM HOME AND TRAVEL TO, FROM OR FOR WORK

5.1. Do employees need to work from home?

Government guidance is for employees to work at home wherever possible for the foreseeable future. Head teachers / managers have been advised to ensure that home working and greater flexibility of working is to be supported wherever possible to comply with the expectation of limiting social contact, which will help to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading. It is recognised however that not all job roles within the Council, CCG and Schools can be undertaken at home and it will be necessary for colleagues to continue to attend work as normal to ensure that we are able to provide priority services to our residents.

Where employees are required to attend their normal workplace, appropriate measures will be in place to ensure social distancing and that the workplace is regularly cleaned. Employees continue to be advised to adhere to the recommended hygiene methods outlined above.

The responsibility for safe and effective home working lies with you as managers / head teachers and it is important that you retain records of who is working from home and what your expectations are of them whilst working from home.

5.2. Key workers who need to travel to, from or for work

Some key workers need to travel to, from or for work as part of their duties. Where this is the case these employees will be provided with a letter to confirm that they are designated by the Council and CCG as an essential key worker, as defined by the Government.

Whilst working and travelling to and from work, essential key workers will need to keep their letter with them at all times along with their work ID pass or appropriate photo ID. Should the individual be stopped by the police or other officials i.e. security during their course of work they will need to show their letter to confirm that they are required to travel to, from or for work as part of their role.

5.3. A member of staff relies on public transport to get to and from work, how will this impact on my ability to get to work if I am not able to work from home?

Many employees rely on public transport to get to and from their place of work. It is highly likely that the recent changes to guidance will impact on our public transport services, with reduced services in place.

Where home working can be accommodated, this should be put in place as soon as possible. Where colleagues are not able to work from home and will need to rely on public transport, you are advised to be as flexible as possible to allow staff to get into work with what may be limited public transport provision.

More information is available on the TfGM website: <https://news.tfgm.com/news/early-morning-peak-time-concessionary-travel-pass-restrictions-lifted-to-help-greater-manchesters-older-and-disabled-get-to-shops-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

5.4. Is there accommodation available for employees who could continue to work but are no longer able to stay at home?

If an employee is able to continue to work but is unable to stay at home, due to a reason related to the COVID-19 outbreak (e.g. a household member requiring shielding and their work involves contact with symptomatic individuals), it may be appropriate to arrange alternative temporary accommodation for them. If you need to arrange alternative accommodation for a temporary period for an employee you will need to contact elainna.sayers@tameside.gov.uk to discuss the circumstances for your request.

5.5. I have employees who are currently absent from work e.g. due to sickness, maternity, adoption, parental or career break leave who will be returning to work imminently to different working arrangements what do I need to do?

Head teachers / managers have been advised to ensure that home working and greater flexibility of working is to be supported wherever possible to comply with the expectation of limiting social contact. It is recognised that employees may feel worried returning to work after a period of absence especially where they are likely to be returning to different working arrangements or in a different role.

It is important that the employee and manager / head teacher plan and agree the return to work, keep in regular contact and ensure the required equipment is available upon the return to work. Some employees might feel they do not want to return to work. In circumstances where an employee has concerns about attending work but is not experiencing symptoms or living with someone with symptoms in their household, their concerns should be discussed with their manager / head teacher so that they can be supported further.

Where alternative working arrangements are unavailable upon the employee's return a full risk assessment should be undertaken in consultation with the employee. Please document the assessment using the normal risk assessment form or the updated document:

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/collectiveagreements/council/hs/riskassessments/covid19>

5.6. Is there any additional equipment available for employees who are now working from home and how can this be delivered?

Where Council employees require IT additional equipment to support them working differently, including from home, they will need to make a request for the required IT items through the IT freshdesk service <https://tmbcit.freshdesk.com/support/home>

IT equipment will be sourced and distributed in priority order as soon as possible. To support IT with this enormous logistical task managers are asked to take a pragmatic

approach and encourage employees to consider the necessity of requesting additional equipment. Equipment collection will be managed in a way that reduces social contact from a central point.

CCG employees/managers will need to contact CCG IT services in the normal way and will receive appropriate instruction for delivery/collection.

For any other items managers with need to liaise directly with distribution services by email to karen.milner@tameside.gov.uk stating the exact location, item and delivery address in order to arrange for items to be delivered to alternative temporary locations. Again, managers are urged to ensure only where necessary items are relocated to minimise the logistical task where possible.

5.7. My service is homeworking but we have a significant number of meetings and contact – how do I decide what is ‘essential’ and what isn’t?

The Council and CCG Senior Management Team have determined which facilities are required to stay open and which will begin to operate differently. Your Senior Manager / Head teacher will be in touch to outline what this means for your service / school. The underlying principles are that unless absolutely necessary to critical service operation, face to face meetings should be avoided and postponed, or replaced via skype or conference call facilities.

5.8. Employees who cannot undertake their role working from home

The Council and CCG is enforcing homeworking where it can be accommodated by services as much as possible to stop the spread of the virus and in line with Government Guidelines. Whilst supporting home working can be accommodated in a number of areas, this is not possible across the whole of the organisation. This may mean that employees will be required to undertake other duties from home to higher priority work which may be within a different service area but can be undertaken from home. Employees may be asked to undertake different duties and will be advised as and when necessary. Employees will need to be supported to ensure that they are clear on the expectations and have the necessary information and skills to undertake the alternative duties. Senior Managers will be working to identify key roles that need to be undertaken to ensure high priority services and functions continue to be delivered to our residents.

If you work in a School and need to self-isolate, Schools have been advised to consider what work staff can be doing at home if they need to self-isolate and whether it is reasonable to ask them to undertake work at home during a period of self-isolation or school closure. Things to consider are lesson preparation and planning, continual professional development, providing marking support to colleagues still in school, additional targeted support over skype / telephone to individuals or groups of pupils.

5.9. Should my apprentice continue with their apprenticeship during this time?

We are currently awaiting further guidance from the Education Skills Funding Agency to advise of appropriate steps to continue to support your apprentice through their learning. We are hoping to have the full guidance over the next week or so, in the meantime can you please ensure your apprentice continues to engage with their learning, which will now be conducted via online and skype provisions depending on the individual provider’s arrangements. Apprentices should also continue to record their 20% off the job learning etc. An apprenticeship should only be paused on agreement with the Organisation and Workforce Development Team as there is currently strict guidance as to what constitutes an appropriate break in learning; this includes both apprentices in an apprentice role and employees who are using an apprenticeship to upskill.

If your apprentice is in a key delivery service area or has been deployed to an alternative area and a break in learning is therefore being requested, please email joanne.pangburn@tameside.gov.uk confirming the name of your apprentice along with an outline of the current situation and we will review the appropriateness of any pause in learning, subject to the Education Skills Funding guidance.

5.10. Employees on probation guidance

Managers / Head teachers should continue to support and review their employee's performance and standards upon completion of the probation period. Any absence related to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, including sickness or self-isolation, should not be considered as part of the probation review absence monitoring considerations.

If there are concerns that an employee is not achieving the required standards, it is strongly encouraged that managers / head teachers consider the request of an extension to be considered allowing the employee further time and opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the standards.

Where employees are redeployed to support critical services during the COVID-19 outbreak, their performance, standards and behaviour can continue to be reviewed. The manager / head teacher may have to seek feedback from the manager supporting whilst the employee undertakes their redeployed duties where this is for another team / service.

5.11. Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS)

The assessed and supported year in employment (ASYE) programme is continuing for newly qualified social workers (NQSWS). The organisation is taking the necessary practical steps to ensure NQSWS's receive the support they need alongside any emerging priorities to successfully complete their assessment.

The designated Principle social workers in Adults and Children's services have established and implemented a robust and agile support package so that NQSWS receive the required one to one supervision, mentoring and access to a range of professional forums including the newly devised online university element.

For further information and support please visit [Skills for Care](#)

5.12. Should I still carry out my employee's Annual Development Review (ADR) / Performance Development Review (PDR)?

The Annual Development Review (ADR) / Performance Development Review (PDR) is the annual conversation that complements managers ongoing monthly one to one's with their employees. The ADR / PDR should focus on a good quality conversation that picks up and reflects on the employees previous work objectives and performance over the last twelve months as well as looking at what the future work objectives will be along with any necessary learning and development.

The timings of conducting an ADR/PDR this year will depend on the services you are currently providing and if they are in critical areas to support residents, businesses and the community during the COVID-19 response. If your teams are classed as critical services, ADRs/PDRs can be completed later in the year and a revised timeline will be published in due course. If your teams are not in key critical service areas, it is good practice to hold ADRs/PDRs within the normal timescales to discuss past performance and also set the future work objectives. As we continue to work through the pandemic it could be that work objectives for your staff and teams looks very different over the next six months as business as usual changes due to emerging priorities brought about by the pandemic.

The Organisation and Workforce Development Team are currently responding and focusing on supporting essential training and development to critical service areas like frontline Adult Social Care and Health where we are training existing staff and new recruits so they can carry out critical frontlines roles in the coming weeks as the crisis reaches its peak. In the longer term we are working to channel shift some of our existing development from classroom to e-learning, whilst expanding our existing e-learning offer. As we move through these unprecedented times please email learninganddevelopment@tameside.gov.uk if you have any emerging learning and development requests and we will respond and support as appropriate whilst we re-align some of our current delivery methods and channels.

The Annual Development Review (ADR) / Performance Development Review (PDR) can be accessed via the Council and CCG staff portal:

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/strive/adr>

http://nww.tamesideandglossop.nhs.uk/contrib2/corp_gov_div/peopleservices/root/PDP.htm

5.13. Free Metrolink travel for essential journeys by NHS and Social Care staff

Free Metrolink travel for NHS and Social Care staff has been introduced from Saturday 11 April until 1 June initially.

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) introduced the NHS and Social Care Transport Scheme on Saturday 11 April, which applies to journeys to and from work and journeys in the course of work made by all staff employed by the NHS and Social Care and Care Worker organisations. This includes:

- Adults and Children's Social workers and Care Workers employed directly by local authorities and those employed by the private, voluntary and independent sectors including, those working in homecare, residential care homes and supported accommodation and re-ablement and those working in auxiliary roles regardless of who the employer is.
- NHS staff and those providing critical services to the NHS or patients either employed directly by the NHS or by the private, voluntary and independent sectors including auxiliary roles.

In order to demonstrate eligibility for this offer, staff will need to show (on request) their official identity badge issued by their employer or another proof of employment.

6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

6.1. What advice is available about social distancing and its impact upon the health and wellbeing for employees? What mechanisms are available to remain connected with colleagues?

It is understandably a difficult time for staff at present. We are experiencing an unprecedented set of circumstances. It is important you keep connected with your team members and colleagues where self-isolation or home working is occurring. Ways to do this includes through the use of conference calling/skype meetings.

It is important that you continue to maintain regular contact with your staff and colleagues. You must still provide the usual support of supervisions, team meets and regular ad hoc updates albeit via digital means rather than face to face e.g. skype / conference calls etc.

The government website gives detailed advice on social distancing and remaining mentally and physically well. Please signpost your staff to the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

There are guides, not just for those that are home working but for the whole workforce around how you can keep yourselves well, both physically and mentally over the coming weeks and months. These guides will also be uploaded under 'working from home' on the [Council](#) and [CCG](#) intranet. Please do keep checking in on the intranet as we will be updating regularly.

The Council, CCG and Schools presently continue to have access to counselling and occupational health services for staff. There is also a wealth of guidance and support on the Council's Health and Wellbeing page accessible here: <https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/strive/healthandwellbeing> and via the CCG page here: <http://nww.tamesideandglossop.nhs.uk/HealthandWellbeing.htm> and via portal lite.

Continual professional development resources are also available to employees 24/7 on our Me Learning platform. Employees will have previously been provided with log in details however if they need support in accessing this please contact learninganddevelopment@tameside.gov.uk.

6.2. Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Health First Aiders

To support the workforce in these challenging times we have been secured support through an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) via a national provider called Vivup EAP, to ensure that help is available to all of our employees at this difficult time.

Vivup EAP provides a range of information and practical support, which is available 24/7 for problems at work and home including anxiety, bereavement, stress, depression, workplace issues, trauma, relationships, finances and family difficulties.

The service is confidential and provides impartial assistance; managers will not receive any feedback about employees that access the service. Employees can contact the service direct as and when they feel the need, without prior discussions with anyone within our organisation.

To access the service, employees can **call 03303 800658** (calls charged at local rate) or to find the full range of services available, visit www.vivup.co.uk where they will be asked to register by selecting Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council from the dropdown list and entering a few details. Once logged into the portal, employees will find the contact details for the EAP as well as self-help Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) workbooks.

Please note the helpline is for mental health support and cannot provide any advice for COVID-19 health/medical-related issues.

Information on the EAP provision has been uploaded to the intranet and can be accessed as follows [Council EAP](#) and [CCG EAP](#)

Employees can also access support via our dedicated team of Mental Health First Aiders, information can be found on the following portal links [Council](#) and [CCG](#). If you have any questions or queries about the service please send these to the workforce development inbox: learninganddevelopment@tameside.gov.uk

7. PAY, ANNUAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS

7.1. How will pay be affected during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak?

Where possible employee's pay will be unaffected during the COVID-19 outbreak, as employees are being asked to work more flexibly and undertake appropriate duties for their role and/or high priority service areas in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Employees already absent from work due to sickness, sabbatical, maternity/adoption, unpaid leave arrangements will continue to receive the appropriate pay entitlement for the circumstances related to their particular leave circumstances. As and when these arrangements come to their planned end, employees will return to normal pay arrangements.

If you are well, i.e. have no symptoms but are required to self-isolate as someone in your household is displaying symptoms, your manager will discuss alternative arrangements with you, for example if you can work from home. Working from home for the period of isolation you will receive full pay and a record will be kept that you are self-isolating.

If you are well but unable to work from home in your role for any or all of the period of self-isolation, you may be asked / able to undertake other duties at home to ensure that key operational services and support is provided to our vulnerable residents. Your senior manager / head teacher will provide further advice if required. Your absence will not be recorded as sickness and you will receive full pay.

You must keep in regular contact with your manager. You must let them know if you develop symptoms during household isolation.

If you are self-isolating because you are unwell, depending on how poorly you are and the type of role you have, you may be able to work flexibly from home during the self-isolation period. If your job role does not allow you to work at home, during the self-isolation period you may be asked / able to undertake other duties at home to ensure that key operational services and support is provided to our vulnerable residents. Your senior manager / head teacher will provide further advice if required. If you are not well enough to undertake any type of work from home, your absence will be treated as sickness and recorded as COVID-19, you will receive full pay for the period of absence related to the virus.

As you are advised not to visit your GP, you may not be able to obtain a Fit Note for any coronavirus related absence. For the first 7 days employees can self-certify. For any further continuous days absence employees will be required to provide a self-isolation note where this is related to having symptoms of coronavirus or living with someone who has symptoms. The government has provided access to the self-isolation note through the [NHS website](#) and [NHS 111 online](#).

Employees who are absent from work due to sickness unrelated to coronavirus for 7 days or more will be required to continue to submit a Fit Note to cover their absence from work.

7.2. Where an employee's forthcoming holiday has been cancelled can they cancel their annual leave or carry forward the annual leave into their next leave year?

It is likely that many colleagues will be affected by the cancellation of holidays and flights. Where possible you are to be as flexible as possible regarding the taking of annual leave to ensure that your staff continue to take the necessary rest from work, despite going away on holiday or not, and to ensure that you are able to maintain operational delivery of high priority services and functions.

Managers are encouraged to be as flexible as possible to support employees in taking their annual leave within their leave year. Where possible, employees can rearrange their leave, for example if they want to break up their pre-planned leave to shorter periods rather than taking a block of leave i.e. 2 weeks. Where annual leave plans are rearranged managers will need to ensure that any cancelled leave is re-booked within the leave year. Annual leave considerations should form part of regular one-to-one discussions to ensure annual leave entitlement is managed effectively throughout the leave year.

It may also be appropriate for managers to ask employees to return back into work where their holiday has been cancelled or request that they rearrange time off to assist with the delivery of high priority services. It is important that we work together and in a pragmatic way to ensure that we continue to deliver our vital services.

Carry over of annual leave from your current annual leave year into the next will remain in line with current rules for all employees, for the majority of employee's this is a maximum of 3 days carry over and for some there may currently be no provisions to carry over annual leave. This is irrespective of the recent Government changes to allow employers to allow more annual leave to be carried into the next year.

Where an employee has additional leave under the additional leave purchase scheme, employees will be expected to use the number of working days purchased within their current leave year and payroll deductions will continue as normal.

Only in exceptional circumstances will exceptions to the current contract of employment to provide more leave carry-over be permitted be considered and this will require the prior approval of Tracy Brennand, Assistant Director, People and Workforce Development.

It is imperative that during this challenging time employees continue to take appropriate time off from work and use their annual leave entitlement and any additional leave purchased.

7.3. What will happen to car park pass deductions from salary during the COVID-19 outbreak as many employees no longer need them?

The car park pass facility enables employees to pay for a reduced car parking pass to use at various car parking locations around the borough. Due to the current situation, where the majority of employees are working from home or have reduced travel arrangements for work it has been deemed appropriate that the payment for parking passes for employees who pay through their salary will be suspended from 1 April 2020 until further notice. Employees do not need to take any action and their payroll record will automatically be updated to reflect the decision.

Employees who have purchased a contract car park pass and have paid in advance for 6 or 12 months duration will be credited with the length of time of the suspension of employee salary deduction period. This credit will either be:

- applied as an extension onto a current pass upon the suspension being lifted; or
- where an existing pass expires during the suspended period, the length of time will be applied as an extended period either on the current pass or on the next pass purchase.

7.4. I pay for childcare vouchers via my salary - can I change the amount of my childcare vouchers?

At any time the organisation's childcare voucher scheme, provided through KiddiVouchers, allows members to change the amount of childcare vouchers they save each month. This may be something that employees want to consider at this time, as the majority of children are no longer attending childcare provisions that require payment for the foreseeable future.

To change their childcare vouchers employees will need to logon to their personal account at <https://www.kiddivouchers.com/login.php>

Employees can amend the value of their contributions and even cancel them. Where an individual chooses to cancel their vouchers they will still have the opportunity to remain part of the scheme as long as they reinstate their childcare vouchers within 52 weeks of cancelling them.

Employees are also advised to review their regular payments that they have set up to childcare providers. It may be appropriate for employees to stop or reduce payments to childcare providers for a period of time. KiddiVouchers enables one off payments as an alternative to regular payments to providers, which may be a more suitable option at this time for some employees.

Employees can contact KiddiVouchers should they need to discuss their personal circumstances on 0800 612 4395 or by email at info@kiddivouchers.com.

7.5. What shall be claimed where employees undertake any work related journeys?

Any additional mileage / travel claims should be made via the usual methods.

Employees who are now working from home and are required to undertake normal travel to and from a workplace for essential key worker duties should not claim the mileage for normal home to work travel. Only additional mileage excluding normal mileage from home to work should be claimed and where linked to the COVID-19 response it should be clearly stated on the claim submission.

7.6. I am contracted to work Bank Holidays (BH) and will be required to work as normal on BH's during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Employees who are normally contracted to work on BH's and who are still required to do so during COVID-19 will receive their normal BH pay entitlement at the rate for the job. Employees will need to submit a claim form in the usual way.

7.7. I am not normally contracted to work on Bank Holidays (BH) but have been asked to in order to support a critical service as part of the COVID-19 response.

Where an employee who is not contracted to work on BH's is asked to work in a critical service to support the COVID-19 response they will be entitled to the BH enhanced pay for the hours worked i.e. for Council NJC employees double time, at the rate for the job undertaken.

Employees will be required to submit a claim form to claim their BH pay.

Where the BH falls on a normal working day for the employee, the claim is for **plain time** for the hours worked as the remaining pay to compensate the employee at double pay will have already been paid in their normal salary. This will be the case for the majority of employees.

Where the BH falls on a non-working day for the employee the claim will need to state double time for the hours worked as they will not have already received part of the payment in their normal salary. Employees should **not** also be entitled to claim a 1/5th of their contracted working week to be taken at a later time.

All claims need to be authorised by the relevant manager and the COVID-19 cost code stated on the claim form. This will ensure that the additional money spent to support the COVID-19 response will be captured accurately.

Managers are asked to use a common sense approach when asking people to work on a BH that wouldn't normally support the COVID-19 response. Additional BH working and payments should only be where necessary, with a flexible working approach adopted where possible, particularly if employees are unable to undertake their normal duties at other times. In such cases a claim should not be submitted.

This provision does not include school staff who are covering school closures on a voluntary rota basis which will ensure they get the required holiday period either before, during or after the school closure period.

7.8. The use of casual workers and pay guidance

Casual workers provide important support for the organisation to continue to deliver critical services and therefore where required casual workers should continue to be engaged and deployed.

Managers / Head teachers are strongly encouraged to honour all commitments where shifts and times for casual workers were known in advance and to act reasonably in these unprecedented times.

Where casual workers are engaged managers will need to continue to approve claims for any hours worked and they will be paid the normal/substantive hourly rate for the hours worked.

Where casual workers are no longer required due to reduced service demand or due to the impact of school closures consideration needs to be given of the expected demand prior to the impact of COVID-19. In such cases an average weekly payment should be paid to ensure individuals are not adversely affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Casual workers are not employees and would not normally be paid when they are not working. However, given the exceptional circumstances, where a casual worker cannot continue to be engaged in work due to reasons related to COVID-19 i.e. self-isolation or extremely vulnerable shielding requirements, they should receive an average weekly payment.

Where a casual worker is sick, including due to COVID-19 (diagnosed or self-diagnosed) they should be reported as sick and statutory sick pay will be paid appropriately.

8. ABSENCE MANAGEMENT AND RECORDING

8.1. What should be recorded for instances of self-isolation/sickness absence relating to coronavirus?

A record of instances of employees either self-isolating; off poorly; caring for dependents as a result of coronavirus is being centrally held by the HR Support / Payroll team.

Managers should detail any instances within the team and notify the service contact and using the normal absence return paperwork (Council and Schools payrollsection@tameside.gov.uk or CCG tracie.towler@tameside.gov.uk).

Please ensure that reasons for absence are recorded on the absence return in line with the following reasons:

- COVID-19 Diagnosed – sickness
- COVID-19 Self Diagnosed – sickness
- Self-isolation – working from home – no absence
- Self-isolation – unable to work from home – authorised absence

- Shielding – working from home
- Shielding – unable to work from home – authorised absence

You should also continue to keep in touch with your employees, as per normal management arrangements for when an employee is absent from work.

Other absences should continue to be recorded and sent to the teams as per usual processes.

You will be notified by your individual management teams of the requirements to record and update them on the impact of staff absence and homeworking levels across your team / service.

8.2. An employee is currently unable to return to work due to being unable to return to the UK how should I record their absence?

The government is in contact with airlines and local authorities to ensure British people travelling abroad can return to the UK as soon as possible. If your employee is unable to return to work as expected you should allow temporary flexible working arrangements to deal with unforeseen prolonged absences such as utilising annual leave, flexi-time, adapting working pattern to enable staff to build back up any hours owed due to absences, access to the holiday purchase scheme where available or access to unpaid leave.

8.3. Will I be expected to continue to manage staff absence through the normal managing attendance process?

There will continue to be staff absences for various reasons other than COVID-19 and it is essential that we maintain our proactive approach to supporting our employees to maintain high attendance at work. However, it is clear that the current unprecedented circumstances are likely to place significant pressures on managers / head teachers and it is recognised that arranging sickness review meetings will not be seen as a priority at the current time.

Where someone is poorly as a result of contracting COVID-19, is unable to work flexibly in any capacity and is required to self-isolate then it would not be appropriate to include this period of sickness absence under the Managing Attendance Procedure triggers for action. Please contact your HR Consultant to take advice on a case by case basis and to discuss any planned absence review meetings that are already in place.

8.4. The requirement to report cases of employee related COVID-19 to the HSE under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)

If there are any work related accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences or near misses which are directly related to COVID-19 then you should report them, as you would any workplace accident, using the accident reporting form and submit to healthandsafety@tameside.gov.uk.

There are some situations which the HSE has specified as reportable under RIDDOR:

- When an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.
- When a worker has been diagnosed as having COVID-19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.
- When a worker dies as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus.

Where necessary the Health and Safety Team will submit RIDDOR reports using the information provided on the accident report form and will contact the relevant Manager for additional details if required.

8.5. Do risk assessments for my teams work activities have to include the appropriate control measures needed for COVID-19?

Yes, risk assessments should identify reasonably foreseeable hazards which pose a significant risk. It is important that the control measures which have been identified as reducing the risk posed by COVID-19 are included within the risk assessments, are put in place and all affected employees are made aware of them.

Some generic risk assessments have been completed and can be accessed on the intranet via the link below.

<https://intranet2.tameside.gov.uk/collectiveagreements/council/hs/riskassessments/covid19>

If you require assistance putting together a risk assessment for your service in respect of specific risks posed to your teams by COVID-19 then please contact heathandsafety@tameside.gov.uk and cc Alison.glover@tameside.gov.uk

9. RECRUITMENT AND AGENCY WORKERS

9.1. I am currently recruiting or am planning to recruit to a vacant post. Can this continue in light of the coronavirus?

Yes. It is important that we continue to recruit to services as required. You are encouraged to use alternative methods for interviewing and assessing candidates such as skype. Telephone interviews instead of face to face. The service provided by the Recruitment Team will remain unchanged.

If you have interviews scheduled in the near future the recruiting manager / head teacher will need to contact candidates and arrange alternative interview and assessment methods.

We are currently undertaking recruitment campaigns to support services through the COVID-19 outbreak. For further information visit <https://greater.jobs/search-and-apply/?jobcategory=All®ion=33195>

9.2. Can agency workers continue to be engaged by the organisation during the COVID-19 outbreak?

There are a number of agency workers engaged across the organisation undertaking a variety of different roles. The engagement of agency workers should continue to be managed in accordance with the needs of the service, taking into account the required financial resources. Where appropriate it may be necessary to redeploy agency workers into different roles to support the service during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Any changes to the original agency engagement should be managed through the normal agency engagement channels; ensuring the purpose and end date for the assignment are clear.

It is not expected that agency workers in the public sector would be furloughed.

9.3. Should schools continue to pay supply teachers and other contingent workers?

The Department for Education (DfE) advice provides, schools will continue to receive their budgets for the coming year as usual, regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure. This will ensure that they are able to continue to pay for staff, and meet their other regular financial commitments.

The DfE expect schools will draw first on their existing staff to maintain necessary provision, but schools may continue to need supply teachers and other temporary workers throughout this period. The DfE encourage schools and employment businesses (agencies) to continue to liaise on any potential need to ensure workers are available where required. The DfE's advice for schools is: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing#workforce>

9.4. Roles that require a DBS check

For roles that are being recruited to that require a DBS check, the Government with effect from 19 March 2020 have made temporary changes to DBS ID checking as a result of the coronavirus COVID 19 outbreak.

The change will enable:

- ID documents to be viewed over video link
- scanned images to be used in advance of the DBS check being submitted

The applicant will be required to present the original versions of these documents when they first attend their employment or volunteering role.

The guidance is accessible here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-19-changes-to-standard-and-enhanced-id-checking-guidelines>

9.5. Carrying out right to work checks during the coronavirus pandemic

Right to work check continue to be necessary and you must continue to check the prescribed documents. It remains an offence to knowingly employ anyone who does not have the right to work in the UK.

However, the Government have advised that the right to work checks have been temporarily adjusted due to coronavirus (COVID-19). This is to make it easier for employers to carry them out.

As of 30 March 2020 the following temporary changes have been made:

- checks can now be carried out over video calls
- job applicants and existing workers can send scanned documents or a photo of documents for checks using email or a mobile app, rather than sending originals
- employers should use the Employer Checking Service if a prospective or existing employee cannot provide any of the accepted documents.

Where the Council's Recruitment, Payroll and Pensions Team are the HR recruitment link, the recruiting manager will be updated of the above changes and required actions.

The government guidance is accessible here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-right-to-work-checks>

9.6. Can an individual who is on furlough leave from an external employer, under the Government Job Retention Scheme, work for the Council, CCG or school?

With many businesses temporarily closing they have made the decision to place employees on furlough leave under the Government's Job Retention Scheme. Many of these employees, are likely to have transferable skills that we need to deliver critical services and may apply for job roles required to support the response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Updated Government guidance issued on 9 April 2020 clarified that individuals can accept temporary work for another employer where the main contract of employment allows. Being on furlough means that legally, individuals are still employed by their original

employer. Accepting another job may therefore be a breach of an existing employment contract especially where it specifically prohibits them from working for other organisations.

Individuals who wish to undertake temporary work for the Council, CCG or School should contact their employer for example their manager or HR department to check if their contract permits the engagement of other work with an alternative employer.

Individuals on furlough leave must be able to return to work as instructed for the employer that placed them on furlough if they decide to stop furloughing the individual. Managers will therefore need to know if any newly recruited members of the workforce are furloughed from another organisation.

10. REDEPLOYMENT / VOLUNTEERING TO SUPPORT CRITICAL SERVICES

10.1. Can employees be asked to work at different work locations or undertake different job roles?

We are dealing with an unprecedented set of circumstances and must ensure that we are able to continue to deliver our identified high priority services. Whilst supporting home working can be accommodated in a number of areas, this is not possible across the whole of the organisation. This may mean that we will require our employees to move from their normal day job to higher priority work and locations which may be within a different service area.

Employees who are asked to undertake different duties will be advised as and when necessary and will be supported to ensure that they are clear on the expectations and have the necessary information and skills to undertake the alternative duties. Under our contract of employment all employees can be required to work from any location within the Tameside area.

We are working actively with our trade union colleagues to ensure that we support our staff in every way possible whilst ensuring high priority services and functions continue to be delivered to our residents. If priorities change staff may be asked to carry out different duties to those initially identified in order to support service delivery.

10.2. What will I be paid if I am redeployed to support critical / frontline services?

Employees will continue to be paid at their current grade whilst they are undertaking different duties to support our critical services.

At this stage it is not possible to determine how long the support in the critical services will be required and how long employees will be away from their normal duties but will be reviewed regularly in accordance with critical services demand and requirements.

10.3. I am not classed as a key worker and would like to volunteer to be re-deployed what do I need to do?

Teams and services are being asked to consider where they can stop delivery of non-essential activities in order to free up staff to help support critical services. If you feel that you are able to support our critical services please inform your manager or email Rachel.Buczynski@tameside.gov.uk or Olivia.Cavanagh@tameside.gov.uk

You will need to provide information regarding your availability in terms of the hours, days, whether you can drive and have a car for business use and confirmation of any specific skills and qualifications. A process has been developed to ensure that volunteers are matched based their skills and availability linking with the priorities from critical services. If you are able to volunteer in any capacity, then we would actively encourage you to do so as

this will make a real and direct difference to the support we can provide to the most vulnerable residents in our borough.

10.4. Family members and friends of employees who wish to volunteer

Many family members and friends have expressed an interest in volunteering to assist critical services throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. All volunteers, who are not employees, should register their interest to volunteer via the [action together website](#)

10.5. Can I volunteer to go and work for other organisations and/or community groups?

Employees working in critical roles for the council, CCG or school should only volunteer for tasks with any other organisation and/or community group where this does not impact on their availability to provide support to critical services.

We are asking employees in the Council, CCG and schools who are members of the reserves / armed forces to please email vanessa.rothwell@tameside.gov.uk who is the link armed forces lead for the organisation. This is as you may be specifically contacted by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) at this time to seek availability and to ensure you are fully supported.

10.6. Who will employees report to when supporting other areas of work?

Individuals who volunteer or are deployed to alternative work will be assigned a new temporary line manager in the area where they will be working. The line manager in the new team will be the day to day contact ensuring the individuals, health, wellbeing, safety and training needs are met for the role and have responsibility for operational matters. The new temporary line manager will be responsible for operational duties and support and will need to communicate with the substantive line manager regarding any functional matters.

The employee's substantive line manager will be informed of the temporary work arrangements and will continue to have a supportive role ensuring supervisions continue, any leave requests are considered and communicated and any absences from work during the time in the other area of work are recorded and reported. The individual's duties during the time in another team will need to continue to be reported under the substantive directorate.