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Lothian NHS Board

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Advice to School Staff

Dear Staff member

In recent days we have been made aware of a member of the Ratho Primary school community a class who has tested positive for COVID-19. This letter is to inform you that you have been identified as having been in **'low risk' contact** with this person. This means you may have shared a classroom or had some other low risk contact in school.

There is no need to self-isolate or take daily LFD tests at present unless contacted separately by Test and Protect and asked to do so. School remains open and you should continue to attend if you are well.

The public health judgement that these types of contact are low risk is based on a range of factors, including vaccination rates and evidence about transmission rates from children and young people.

If you or anyone in your household develops any **symptoms** of COVID-19, the symptomatic person must not come to work, they must self-isolate and should have a PCR test as soon as possible. The rest of the household are not required to self-isolate whilst the test result is awaited, but they are advised to do daily LFD tests and monitor closely for any symptoms developing. Further information and guidance can be found in NHS Inform. Further information on testing can also be found on **www.nhsinform.scot** or by phoning 119 if you cannot book online.

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of: new continuous cough; high temperature; or a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).

Please be reassured that for most people coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. Although our understanding of the Omicron variant is evolving, there is no evidence of a higher risk at present. Vaccination is highly effective at preventing severe disease. Children are at particularly low risk of illness from coronavirus infection.

To help reduce the risk to your family and your school community, please also:

- **Ensure you take a lateral flow test (LFD) before returning to school, and continue to test twice-weekly.** This can help reduce the likelihood of spread in schools, by catching infections early.

    - Please ensure that all test results, whether positive, negative or void, are recorded on the online portal at: **www.covidtest.scot** OR by phoning 119.
    - Free test kits are available to all school staff directly from the school. Please ask the school if you are having any problems accessing tests.

- **Arrange vaccination** as soon as possible, if you or anyone eligible in your family have not yet been vaccinated. **www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine**. **Vaccination** is our best defence against COVID-19 causing anyone to become seriously unwell.

- Adopt additional caution if meeting with friends or family who you know to be at higher levels of risk.

- Wear a **face covering** in line with guidance, keep your **distance**, keep rooms **ventilated**, and **wash your hands** with soap and water regularly.

- If you have heightened concern, in addition to LFD testing there remains the option for education staff to have access to asymptomatic PCR testing for the purposes of reassurance. As previously, this can be accessed through the UK Government website at www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test. When prompted, you should indicate you are an essential worker, that you have been "told to get a test by my nursery, work or place of education", and that you are in Scotland and work in education. Note that as a low risk contact, you are not required to self-isolate while awaiting the results of any such optional asymptomatic PCR testing.

You can find more trusted advice on **www.nhsinform.scot**

Yours faithfully

Health Protection Team
NHS Lothian