



Media Release

For immediate release

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Education Settings prepare to reopen

Head teachers and leaders of early years settings will be reaching out to some parents later today to ask them to register interest in sending their children in to settings and schools for childcare and supervision during the half-term break, as the island prepares to partially reopen its education sites.

The purpose of this contact is to prepare Public Health services for the roll-out of a new testing system which is being developed to support the reopening of education sites as safely as possible.

In the first island-wide lockdown, education settings remained open to all vulnerable children and the children of all essential and critical workers to allow them to work and not have to worry about childcare. However, given the current situation across the island and the importance of keeping the numbers of children and staff on any education site as low as possible, it is necessary to further filter those eligible to access on-site childcare.

Teams of officers from ESC and HSC have been hard at work to develop a system which will safely allow these targeted groups of vulnerable children and children of some essential workers to benefit from on-site care next week.

This plan involves a robust testing system, which will see any children or staff tested before entering a setting. They will then be continually tested on a rolling basis going forwards.

The strengthened criteria for qualifying for this childcare means that **only children whose parents are both essential workers** (unless in a single parent household), **AND where all adults in the home need to leave the house to work** will be allowed to attend.

Early Years Settings, Special Schools, Primary Schools and Secondary Schools (for pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 primarily) will be initially prioritised in this new programme of testing. The College of FE will continue to offer remote support as required for any learners who need contact next week. Children attending the island's special schools and who may have

complex medical needs will be supported through a bespoke programme of partnership support between HSC and ESC and will be invited into school on an individual basis.

Those parents of eligible children for half-term support are being asked to respond quickly to their schools or settings. This will help to establish the numbers that will need to be tested quickly and in time for attendance on-site during half-term. Once expressions of interest for attendance, in line with the criteria noted above, have been collated Head Teachers and settings leaders will issue individual invitations to those children who are eligible to attend over the half-term period and Public Health teams will take this information forward to develop the testing process.

Ends