



To All Headteachers

**Children, Young People and  
Education**

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Date: 31 March 2021

Dear Colleague

OFSTED Inspection update

On 29th March, we received confirmation that Ofsted will undertake on-site, lighter-touch inspections in the summer term but it will not resume a full programme of graded inspections until September. Unlike 'full' inspections, these visits will allow inspectors to assess how well schools and providers are educating their learners and keeping them safe, but they will not result in a grade.

However, where the evidence strongly suggests that a school's current grade is no longer a fair reflection of its work – for example where the school is graded 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' but has clearly improved – inspectors will be able to convert to a full, graded inspection either immediately or later in the term. As always, Ofsted will do the same if a visit to a higher-graded school highlights a significant cause for concern.

Ofsted is currently piloting some limited changes to inspection methods to take account of the challenges raised by COVID-19. An updated set of inspection handbooks with full details of these changes will be published after the Easter break.

School Visitors and Social Care

Under the Operational Guidance, visitors to schools are acceptable where required. This may include visitors to support the operation of the school, such as temporary supply staff, or visitors to support the health, wellbeing and safety of individual pupils, such as therapists or social workers. In a small number of instances Social Care colleagues have been unable to access school premises to visit children when carrying out statutory duties, including visits as part of a s47 enquiry; the purpose of which is to assess a child's needs where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer,

significant harm. Whilst many visits can be scheduled and agreed ahead of time, unfortunately there will be circumstances where short notice is unavoidable.

We recognise the tremendous strain schools continue to be under and that these instances are not because schools do not wish for social workers to be able to support children and their families, we will work with schools collaboratively to ensure visits can take place in an appropriate and secure way for all parties.

### Letter of Thanks and Update – Virtual School Kent

A letter of thanks from Tony Dorran, Headteacher Virtual School Kent is appended to this letter.

*VSK would like to express thanks to you all for the support we have received from Attendance Officers and Schools throughout the difficult period in Terms 3 and 4. Despite the situation, we are pleased to let you know that:*

**Over 85% of schools are routinely returning the statutory data to us each week without any need for follow up emails/calls.**

*Going forward, we really need your support with **Exclusion letters**:*

- *Please could you ensure any Exclusion Letters (and any unauthorised absences) are sent directly to the VSK Attendance mailbox on the **same day**.*

*This is not only for safeguarding purposes but also to ensure that VSK can swiftly support your school and our young people.*

### Registering PCR Tests

In order to receive the result of a PCR test conducted at home and not at a testing site, each test must be registered with gov.uk. The majority of the time the PCR test will have been ordered online by the user, such as a symptomatic member of staff or student; providing the user with an order ID that can be used for registering the kit online. However where the kit was provided through other means and not directly ordered, such as the additional PCR test kits recently provided to secondary schools via KCC, an order ID is not available.

The system allows for the registration of test kits without order numbers. This is not a new function or a complex one, however we have recently received queries from schools regarding this as all pupils have returned to school, a summary of the instructions are below:

When registering a PCR test kit here: <https://www.test-for-coronavirus.service.gov.uk/register-kit>, after clicking Start Now the first page will ask for an order number. Simply click 'register your kit in a different way'; that will then allow the kit to be registered using the barcode on the test kit. A screenshot is appended to this letter.

I wish you a well deserved and restful break.

Yours sincerely

*Christine McInnes*

Christine McInnes  
**Director of Education**

**ALPHA** This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

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## What's your order ID?

You'll find your 10-digit order ID at the top of the confirmation email you received when your test kit was ordered.

Entering your order ID is the quickest and easiest way to register your kit - you will not have to enter information previously provided.

Your order ID looks like this in the confirmation email. The email was sent from "Coronavirus Home Testing":

Your 10-digit order ID is: 0123456789 (example)

Order ID

[Continue](#)

If you did not receive an order ID, you need to [register your kit a different way](#). Please do not use the link if you have an order ID.



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**FAO: Head Teachers, Designated Teachers of Children in Care, Attendance Officers**

**Subject: Essential Update re Attendance Information for Kent Children in Care**

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**Attendance Monitoring for Kent Children in Care**

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Again, thank you for your continued support and if you would like clarification or have any suggestions on how we can improve this service at any time, please contact us:

Email: [vskattendance@kent.gov.uk](mailto:vskattendance@kent.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 03000 419771

Wishing you all a happy and safe Easter holiday,

Tony Doran  
Head Teacher, Virtual School Kent