



Public Health England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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To: Directors of public health, consultants in dental public health, commissioners and providers of supervised toothbrushing and fluoride varnish programmes

27th May 2020

Dear colleagues,

RE: Supervised toothbrushing and fluoride varnish programmes in schools and childcare settings

On 12th May [guidance](#) was issued to educational and childcare settings that from the week commencing 1 June 2020 at the earliest, primary schools will be asked to welcome back children in Nursery, Reception, year 1 and year 6, alongside priority groups. Supervised toothbrushing and fluoride varnish programmes that were in place for these age groups prior to school closures should not be re-established at this time but suspended during the initial recovery period as schools adjust to the return of pupils. This would then be subject to review, in preparation for the reintroduction of the programmes in the autumn term.

These programmes are commissioned to support the most vulnerable children with the poorest oral health. In order to continue to support these children and families the distribution of toothbrushes and paste, either through schools or by post should be considered. In some areas this has already begun and has also been facilitated through other avenues for example via food banks.

The following school based oral health programmes may also be useful;

e-bug Prevention of infection: *oral hygiene*. Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 https://e-bug.eu/junior_pack.aspx?cc=eng&ss=2&t=Oral%20hygiene

Change4Life dental lesson plans for schools for lower and upper primary school pupils. The teaching resources are all free to download from the School Zone, <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/resources/keeping-our-teeth-healthy-lesson-plans>

When routine dentistry recommences families should be encouraged to take their children to see the dental team for routine care and preventive advice and interventions such as the application of fluoride varnish.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sandra White, National Lead of Dental Public Health, **Public Health England**