

Parents and carers of children at
Pear Tree Haddington Nurseries
Musselburgh Private Nurseries

Date 8 September 2022
Your Ref HPT/GM
Our Ref Health Protection Team

Enquiries to Health Protection Team
Direct Line 0300 790 6264
Email health.protection@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Many thanks for your cooperation in our current work to investigate and control the outbreak of E. coli in the East Lothian area.

We know this is a difficult time and we appreciate there are a number of you awaiting results, or are contacting the team with further queries, or to provide feedback to the health protection team.

The health protection team are specialist nurses with responsibility for implementing the actions directed by the multi-agency Incident Management Team. They are not able to provide information about the ongoing investigation, nor on decisions to reopen nurseries. This is the responsibility of the Incident Management Team and is confidential while the investigation is ongoing, so please do not ask them for information they are unable to share.

We also know some of you are very frustrated with the time it is taking to receive results. Testing for E. coli takes a minimum of a week to complete, often longer due to the complexity and range of tests carried out on each sample to identify specific strains of E. coli and to rule out the presence of other pathogens, such as norovirus. In addition, currently across the UK there is a large increase in the incidence of E. coli, placing unprecedented pressure on our national E. coli reference lab. Please be assured that the health protection team contact those with negative results as they become available, so please do not call in asking for updates as this removes nurses from being able to respond to the outbreak. Furthermore, please do not call your GP for results, as they are not responsible for clearing individuals restricted or excluded under the public health act. The decision on the nursery re-opening will depend upon the decision taken by the multi-agency Incident Management Team, based on evidence available, and this will be communicated once a decision has been taken.

Two nurseries have already reopened – Pear Tree Church Street and Meadowpark. The next nursery awaiting a decision to reopen is Pear Tree West Road Nursery:

- A deep commercial clean of West Road was conducted on Thursday 8 September 2022
- A re-inspection of West Road by a multiagency team is planned Friday 9 September 2022
- A possible re-opening of West Road is planned for next week. Further information will be released by the nursery once a decision has been made.

Clearance samples for the two Musselburgh Private Nursery branches are being processed, and the nursery is working on a series of recommendations after a joint site visit by representatives of the Incident Management Team. A further visit is planned early next week with the aim of supporting the nursery to reopen as soon as possible.

We also know some of you have been in touch to provide feedback on the management of the outbreak itself. We are very sorry for the inconvenience and frustration caused. If you would like to provide feedback please email feedback@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk.

Further information on the NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team is available here: <https://www.nhslothian.scot/YourRights/PatientExperienceAndFeedback/>

Yours faithfully,

Dr Graham Mackenzie

**Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS Lothian
Co-Chair of the Incident Management Team**