

## GL340 - Guidance on support from schools during the Coronavirus period

Over the last few days there have been many stories about schools and individuals offering support and resources to help cope with the Coronavirus outbreak.

These range from the donation of science goggles to using 3D printers to manufacture face shields and other equipment.

D&T departments are perfectly placed to be involved in these types of initiatives, and D&T staff and pupils, already strive to be self-sufficient and creative in developing ideas and solutions to real problems, an ideal trait for these difficult times.

However, we need to remind schools that to make effective PPE and products which are to be used by others, requires specialist conditions and rigorous testing. Products suitable for use as PPE or in critical situations, have to go through thorough testing regimes set by the ISO/EN/BS standards via an accredited 3rd party testing house.

The question manufacturers need to ask is: How can we know that the equipment will be safe and effective?

At CLEAPSS we have tried to manufacture face shields using our 3D printers, but had little success. The prototypes worked, but developing a system for successful production, using different materials and working in a clean environment proved too difficult, and we had to halt production.

This exercise raised a number of issues that schools should consider, prior to offering to make items for others to use:

- Does the schools have capacity in terms of time/equipment/staff/materials?
- Do you know (for certain) the materials are what the label says, we know many 3d printer filaments don't actually match the label when tested
- Are the materials safe to use for the item in its real-world application?
- Can the production process be carried out hygienically?
- How can the final artefact be tested? What will be done with the results from testing?
- How will the goods be stored prior to use?
- How will the goods be transported to the workplace?

Given all of the above it is CLEAPSS advice that it would **NOT** go into production of PPE / other items unless this has been through the government procurement website (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business>) . See below excerpt from CLEAPSS Guide GL336

From GL336:

“We are aware that schools are donating PPE and other equipment to hospitals and doctors. CLEAPSS is currently awaiting further guidance from the DfE and NHS about any national schemes for this and what is required in terms of specifications and equipment. At the moment, **we would not advise schools approaching individual hospitals and staff with donations**, however if a request for such equipment is made to your school then you must discuss with them what you have, what it has been used for, and the specification(s) of the equipment.

Public Health England have made us aware of this link for those wanting to donate their equipment:  
<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business>

You must ensure any donated equipment is actually going to a hospital / doctors, you are liable for ensuring it is going to be used in an appropriate manner. Do not give away all of your PPE as this would mean you are unable to do any practical work when you return to ‘normal’ school life. It would be prudent to get a signed receipt for the items you are donating a) to record what you have donated and b) to help for when you are restocking.”