



Covid-19 Summary of Guidance Changes w/c 3/1/22

What parents/carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19

As we start the new term the government has released the latest guidance for parents and carers in relation to COVID-19

The main messages from this guidance are:

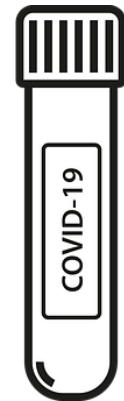
- nationally, education and childcare settings are open, and attendance is mandatory (for schools) and strongly encouraged (at childminders, nurseries and colleges)
- the [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#) has made it clear that the overwhelming majority of children and young people still have no symptoms or very mild illness only
- updated advice on tracing close contacts and isolation to reflect the changes to isolation rules
- continuing to take regular rapid tests will help you to identify infections early and reduce transmission
- your nursery, school or college no longer trace close contacts - close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace
- children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, are not required to self-isolate
- your child no longer needs to remain in a consistent group ('bubble')
- if the number of positive cases substantially increases in your nursery, school, or college, or if your nursery, school, or college is in an enhanced response area, you might be advised that additional measures should be introduced
- all children aged 12 and over are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination
- People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their education setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.
- in primary schools, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by staff, adults, and those aged over 11 (including visitors) when moving around in corridors and communal areas

- where pupils in year 7 and above are educated, we recommend that face coverings should be worn by pupils and students, staff and adult visitors when moving around the premises, outside of classrooms, such as in corridors and communal areas

For further details regarding this guidance can be found by following the link below: [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges)

Testing for pupils and students after the holiday period

The government has asked that secondary school pupils undertake one on-site test, on return in January. This will help boost testing participation and reduce transmission after a period of social mixing during the holidays. Pupils should then be strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and to their setting.



Further education and higher education students, and staff in all education and childcare settings, should take one self-test at home either the evening or morning before they return in January, then continue to test twice weekly at home. Colleges should continue to make LFD tests available to students and staff who need them to enable them to test prior to, and at, the start of term.

Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for COVID-19



Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been **reduced to 7 days** in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. **Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation.** The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion.

If both these test results are negative, and pupils/students do not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to their education setting from day 8.

Health and social care workers, including those working in education settings, should follow guidance for their sector on taking LFD tests on day 8, 9 and 10. For more information, visit [COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings](#).

A reminder that the current requirements on remote education continue to remain in place



As students and pupils return to education and childcare settings following the holiday period, the current requirements for remote education continue to remain in place.

It is recognised that the high rates of COVID-19 may cause difficulties with the availability of staff. The shared priority is to keep education settings open and children and young people continuing face-to-face education.

Where there is a need for remote education, live streaming is the preferred method for providing this wherever possible. There should be regular feedback and checking in with students and pupils.

Further advice and support is available through our [remote education service](#) and you can also access bespoke one-to-one support from the [EdTech Demonstrator network](#).

Update to the definition of vulnerable children



For many children, continuing to have the protective factor of face-to-face education is vital. Throughout the pandemic, settings have continued to provide on-site places for this group of children. As has been the case since March 2020, there are three categories of children and young people who should benefit from prioritised on-site provision:

- those with a social worker
- those with an Education, Health and Care Plan
- a group of children considered locally, including by settings and local authorities, to be 'otherwise vulnerable'

The DFE have updated their [guidance on children of critical workers and vulnerable children who can access school or education settings](#) to include a broader definition of children classified as vulnerable. In addition to the above, this list now includes:

- children known to children's social care services in the past
- children whose home circumstances might be particularly challenging because of domestic abuse, parental offending, adult mental health issues, and drug and alcohol addiction