

North Yorkshire County Council **Education settings Q&A**

Contents

Where can I find the latest guidance?	2
Should staff/pupils who are contacts of a case be allowed to attend their education setting?	2
What should staff/pupils do if they develop symptoms of COVID-19?	2
Should staff/pupils isolate if they test positive for COVID-19?	3
What is the advice if a parent tries to send a symptomatic child to a school/setting?	3
Should staff/pupils carry out twice weekly asymptomatic testing?	3
Do we need to keep an Asymptomatic Test Site (ATS) onsite?	4
Can staff and students still access test kits?	4
What are the ‘threshold levels’ set out by DfE?	4
Is there a need for Early Years/Childminder settings to notify Ofsted about cases?	5
When should cases of COVID-19 be reported to NYCC Public Health?	5
What is the current advice on holding sports fixtures/residential trips etc.?	6
What is the recommended public health advice on when to wear face coverings in education settings?	6
How do we support those previously identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?	7
What out of hours support is available for schools?	7

Where can I find the latest guidance?

Guidance for schools: coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-schools-coronavirus-covid-19>

Advice for parents and carers during COVID-19

- [Information for parents and carers about attending schools, nurseries and colleges during COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during COVID-19](#)

Guidance on managing COVID-19 in different settings

- [Contingency framework for managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings](#)
- [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance – February 2022](#)
- [Guidance on running and managing early years, schools, colleges and other education providers during COVID-19](#)

Should staff/pupils who are contacts of a case be allowed to attend their education setting?

Staff, children and young people who are contacts may attend their education settings as usual. This includes staff who have been in close contact within their household, unless they are able to work from home. Close contacts should follow the [COVID-19: people with COVID-19 and their contacts guidance](#).

What should staff/pupils do if they develop symptoms of COVID-19?

Anyone with symptoms should take a PCR test and stay at home if positive. People who have tested positive will continue to be advised to stay at home for five full days and then receive two negative test results on consecutive days before leaving. If a student or staff member receives a positive LFD result, they should stay at home.

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are a recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If you have any of these symptoms, you [should order a PCR test](#). You are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people while you are waiting for the test result.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

Should staff/pupils isolate if they test positive for COVID-19?

Yes. From 24 February, the Government removed the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. In addition, the Government will no longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for 7 days and routine contact tracing will end.

Pupils, staff and other adults should follow guidance on People with COVID-19 and their contacts if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Pupils in boarding schools should usually self-isolate in their boarding school. Only in exceptional circumstances, where there is an overriding health or safeguarding issue, should a pupil self-isolate away from school.

Where appropriate, you should support those who are self-isolating because they have tested positive to work or learn from home if they are well enough to do so.

Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days. Pupils and staff should return to school as soon as they can, in line with guidance for People with COVID-19 and their contacts.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts/covid-19-people-with-covid-19-and-their-contacts>

What is the advice if a parent tries to send a symptomatic child to a school/setting?

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a child with the key symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend the setting, given the potential risk to others.

If a parent or carer insists on a child attending your setting where they have a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19, you can take the decision to refuse the child if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other children and staff from possible infection with COVID-19.

Pupils, staff and other adults should follow guidance on [People with COVID-19 and their contacts](#) if they have [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1056993/20220223_EY_guidance.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1056991/220224_Schools_guidance.pdf

Should staff/pupils carry out twice weekly asymptomatic testing?

From 21 February, staff and pupils in mainstream secondary schools will not be expected to continue taking part in regular asymptomatic testing and should follow asymptomatic testing advice for the general population.

Staff and pupils in specialist SEND settings, Alternative Provision, and SEND units in mainstream schools are advised to continue regular twice weekly testing. For further information, [see Special schools and other specialist settings: coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Regular twice-weekly asymptomatic testing will remain for staff and students of secondary age and above in SEND settings, Alternative Provision, and SEND units in mainstream schools or equivalent in FE colleges.

Regular twice-weekly asymptomatic testing is also still advised for staff in open and secure children's homes as well as children of secondary school age and above in open children's homes. Children and young people arriving in Secure Children's Homes should still only test twice on arrival.

In the event of an outbreak, schools and settings may also be advised by their local health team or Director of Public Health (DPH) to increase testing for a period of time.

Do we need to keep an Asymptomatic Test Site (ATS) onsite?

Mainstream settings should not maintain an ATS. Settings that are advised to continue regular testing, such as SEND and Alternative Provision settings or SEND units and cohorts in FE, are currently advised to maintain an ATS.

Can staff and students still access test kits?

Settings advised to continue to regular testing should use existing channels. For mainstream settings, the education channel remains open to supply test kits for an outbreak if advised by the local health protection team, or director of public health (North Yorkshires Public Health Team). Settings should use up existing stocks in the first instance or advise staff and students to access tests via local pharmacies or by ordering online.

Until 1st April, free PCR and LFD tests will still be available to everyone through national channels and can be requested online or by calling 119.

- Ordering LFDs: [Order coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rapid lateral flow tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)
- Ordering PCR (if symptoms of COVID-19): [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-free-PCR-test)

The latest guidance [Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-how-to-stay-safe-and-help-prevent-the-spread) suggests individuals may wish to take rapid lateral flow tests as a way to manage their personal risk and the risk to those around them. This may be particularly important before visiting people who are at higher risk of severe illness if they get COVID-19.

What are the 'threshold levels' set out by DfE?

The Contingency Framework has been updated on 24th February and sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage COVID-19 risk day-to-day:

“For most settings, it will make sense to think about taking extra action if they face severe operational disruption to face-to-face education. The thresholds, detailed below, can be used by settings as an indication for when to seek public health advice if they are concerned. For most education and childcare settings, these include:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection
- evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID-19
- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group

For special schools, alternative provision, SEND/AP units within schools and colleges, open and secure children's homes and settings that operate with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students and staff at any one time:

- 2 children, pupils, students and staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period and/or there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable individuals within the affected group

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting. Examples are available for each section, but a group will rarely mean a whole setting or year group."

Settings can seek public health and operational advice by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or public health advice by contacting the NYCC public health team at education.COVID19@northyorks.gov.uk.

Is there a need for Early Years/Childminder settings to notify Ofsted about cases?

"From 21 February 2022, you are no longer required to notify Ofsted, or the childminder agency with which you are registered, of any COVID-19 cases in the setting, whether that is of a child or staff member.

Ofsted will only need to know about COVID-19 if the severity and impact on an individual impacts the ongoing provision in line with 3.78 of the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework](#)."

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1056993/20220223_EY_guidance.pdf

When should cases of COVID-19 be reported to NYCC Public Health?

The [operational guidance](#) sets out the measures that all education settings should have in place to manage COVID-19 risk day-to-day. For most settings, it will make sense to think about taking extra action if they face severe operational disruption to face-to-face education.

The thresholds, detailed below, can be used by settings as an indication for when to seek public health advice if they are concerned.

For most education and childcare settings, these include:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection
- evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID-19

- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of [vulnerable staff or students](#) within the affected group

For special schools, alternative provision, SEND/AP units within schools and colleges, open and secure children’s homes and settings that operate with 20 or fewer children, pupils, students and staff at any one time:

- 2 children, pupils, students and staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period and/or there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable individuals within the affected group

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting. Examples are available for each section, but a group will rarely mean a whole setting or year group.

Settings can seek public health and operational advice by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or by emailing education.COVID19@northyorks.gov.uk.

Higher education providers should continue to liaise with education.COVID19@northyorks.gov.uk. If and when outbreaks occur that require public health support, providers should work with their local HPTs to identify any additional measures to put in place.

What is the current advice on holding sports fixtures/residential trips etc.?

Contingency plans should include a range of options that education settings can implement where necessary to manage severe operational impacts or identified health risks of a COVID-19 outbreak. This could include actions to limit:

- residential educational visits
- open days
- transition or taster days
- parental attendance in settings
- live performances in settings

Whilst we are not currently recommending restrictions to these activities, we may recommend restrictions in individual settings or across geographical areas for outbreak management. As always, the more mixing that takes place, the more risk for COVID-19 transmission. If settings are concerned, they should seek to limit these activities based on their own risk assessments.

Educational visits should be subject to risk assessments as normal and reflect any public health advice or in-country advice of the international destination. [General guidance](#) on educational visits is available and is supported by [specialist advice from the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel \(OEAP\)](#). For international educational visits, you should refer to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office travel advice and the guidance on international travel before booking and travelling to make sure that the out-of-school setting group meets any entry and in country requirements, especially in relation to vaccinations.

What is the recommended public health advice on when to wear face coverings in education settings?

“Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors in classrooms or communal areas. Staff and pupils should follow [wider advice on face coverings](#) outside of school, including on transport to and from school.

A director of public health might advise you that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms (by pupils, staff and visitors, unless exempt). You should make sure your contingency plans cover this possibility.”

How do we support those previously identified as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable?

The Schools Contingency Framework has been updated on 24th February to include the following advice:

“Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) will not be advised to shield again.

The situation is now very different to when shielding was first introduced. We understand a lot more about the virus and what makes someone more at risk from severe disease 13 from COVID-19. The vaccine continues to be successfully rolled out, and other treatments and interventions are becoming available.

Individuals previously identified as CEV are advised to continue to follow the same guidance as the general public on [how to stay safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19](#). Individuals with a weakened immune system should follow DHSC and UKHSA advice for [people whose immune system means they are at higher risk from COVID-19](#).

The risk to children and young people of severe disease from COVID-19 is very low compared to adults, even for those with chronic conditions. All children and young people over 5, including those who have been identified by their medical team as being [at higher risk](#), are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations. They should attend their education setting unless advised otherwise by a health care professional or medical team.

Individuals should consider advice from their health professional on whether additional precautions are right for them.”

What out of hours support is available for schools?

DfE coronavirus helpline

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Saturday to Sunday, 10am to 6pm

For public health emergencies, please contact the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) regional Health Protection Team out of hours on 0151 909 1219.