

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

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Where can I find the latest guidance?

All COVID-specific guidance for education settings has been removed.

From 1st April, all COVID-19 education guidance has changed, and you should now consult UKHSA's 'health protection in schools and other childcare facilities' guidance for advice on managing specific infectious diseases, including COVID-19: [Health protection in education and childcare settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-protection-in-education-and-childcare-settings)

Updated guidance on [emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergency-planning-and-response-for-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings) is available.

Updated general national guidance:

[People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19), which includes guidance on children and young people (aged 18 years and under) who have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19.

Guidance for living safely with respiratory infections, including coronavirus (COVID-19): [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19)

Free testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) from the NHS has **ended for most people in England** - **updated guidance is available here** [Changes to testing for COVID-19 in England - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/news/2020/04/covid-19-testing-ends-for-most-people-in-england)

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

Staff, children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

Anyone who is a close contact of someone who has had a positive test result for COVID-19 should follow the section 'What to do if you are a close contact of someone who has had a positive test result for COVID-19', contained in the new guidance: [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19)

What are the main symptoms of respiratory infections, including COVID-19?

The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar. It is not possible to tell if you have COVID-19, flu or another respiratory infection based on symptoms alone. Most people with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections will have a relatively mild illness, especially if they have been vaccinated.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual

- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

If anyone has symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and they have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, they are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

What should staff do if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 and have not taken a test?

Anyone with symptoms of respiratory infection, including COVID-19 should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until they no longer have a high temperature (if they had one) or until they no longer feel unwell.

Further guidance can be found here: [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19)

What is the advice if pupils (aged 18 years and under) have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19?

Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.

Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to return.

All children and young people with respiratory symptoms should be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing and/or sneezing and to wash their hands after using or disposing of tissues.

It can be difficult to know when to seek help if a child is unwell. If you are worried, especially if they are aged under 2 years old, then you should seek medical help.

What are the options for testing?

The majority of people in England will no longer be eligible for free Covid-19 tests from 1st April.

The Government has set out the groups who will still be eligible for free testing when they have symptoms of the virus. These include some hospital patients, some people at high risk of severe disease from COVID-19 and some who live or work in “high risk settings” including NHS and adult social care settings or prisons. More information can be found here: [Changes to COVID-19 testing in England from 1 April - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/changes-to-covid-19-testing-in-england-from-1-april)

For anyone who does not fall into the categories listed in the guidance but who wishes to test for COVID-19, lateral flow tests can be bought online or from high street or supermarket pharmacies.

What is the advice for those aged 18+ who have taken a test for COVID-19 and the result is positive?

Try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result is very likely to have COVID-19 even if they do not have any symptoms. They can pass on the infection to others, even without symptoms.

Many people with COVID-19 will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days. Anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result, should try **to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days after the day the test was taken**. Please note there is different advice for children and young people aged 18 and under, please see the next section.

What is the advice for those aged under 18 years who have taken a test for COVID-19 and the result is positive?

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and **avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test**, if they can. If after 3 days they feel well and do not have a high temperature then they can return to the setting. Whilst further testing during the same period of infection is not currently advised under national guidance, should individuals continue to test positive after 3 days (or 5 days if aged 18 or over) then return to setting should be risk-assessed.

Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

The government have produced an info graphic to provide advice on how to reduce the spread of infection with the people you live with if you have COVID-19.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065735/AG232_Safe_at_home_infographic.pdf

What do we do if we have a suspected outbreak or incident?

All settings should have in place baseline infection prevention and control measures that will help to manage the spread of infection.

If an outbreak or incident is suspected, education and childcare settings should review and reinforce the baseline infection prevention and control measures they already have in place.

This will include:

- ensuring that all staff and students who are unwell do not attend the setting. Further guidance on the management of specific infectious diseases, including advised exclusion periods (see section below)
- ensuring all eligible groups are enabled and supported to take up the offer of national immunisation programmes including coronavirus (COVID-19) and flu
- ensuring occupied spaces are well ventilated and let fresh air in
- reinforcing good hygiene practices such as frequent cleaning, see chapter 2

- considering communications to raise awareness among parents and carers of the outbreak or incident and to reinforce key messages, including the use of clear hand and respiratory hygiene measures within the setting such as E-Bug

Settings or parents or carers may wish to speak to their health visitor (childcare settings) or school nurse (all schools) about the support they can offer.

When do we consider excluding a child from attending school?

Children with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or mild cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education or childcare setting.

Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature* should stay at home and where possible avoid contact with other people. They can go back to their education or childcare setting when they no longer have a high temperature and they are feeling well enough to return.

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and where possible **avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test**. If after 3 days they feel well and do not have a high temperature then they can return to the setting. Whilst further testing during the same period of infection is not currently advised under national guidance, should individuals continue to test positive after 3 days (or 5 days if aged 18 or over) then return to setting should be risk-assessed.

Children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend the setting. Further information for close contacts is available here: [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19)

*A high temperature is 38°C or above, or if you feel hot to touch on your chest or back.

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 (such as a high temperature) 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.

Should staff/pupils carry out twice weekly asymptomatic testing?

From 1st April, free testing for coronavirus (COVID-19) from the NHS has ended for most people in England. For further information please visit [Changes to testing for COVID-19 in England - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/news/2020/04/changes-to-testing-for-covid-19-in-england)

Whilst regular asymptomatic testing is no longer required for education settings, lateral flow tests can be purchased through pharmacies and online if required.

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 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Although the latest national guidance removes the need to report and directly manage cases of respiratory infections, consider taking extra action if you face severe operational disruption to face-to-face education.

You should contact your [UKHSA HPT](#) (health protection team) if there is:

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

Settings can seek public health and operational advice by phoning the DfE COVID-19 helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or by emailing education.COVID19@northyorks.gov.uk.

Please consult our guidance document 'NYCC Public Health advice for educational settings' and contact us if you need any additional support.

What is the current advice on educational trips etc.?

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).

The OEAP provide guidance including actions to manage the risk of disease during a [variety of visits](#). This guidance is also relevant if animals are brought into the setting.

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 school group meet any entry and in country requirements especially in relation to vaccinations. Additional information can be obtained from [TravelHealthPro](#).

Further details on health considerations and actions to take before, during and after a visit can be found here: [Health and safety on educational visits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Further information on specific types of visits can be found here: [Chapter 6: educational visits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Those attending education or childcare settings will not normally be expected to wear a face covering.

For general advice on when to consider wearing a face covering please visit [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19). There is additional guidance on wearing a face covering for people who have respiratory symptoms or who have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case here: [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19).

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 (CEV)?

Individuals previously identified as CEV are advised to follow the same guidance as the general public on [Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/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 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](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk-from-covid-19), 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.