



Policy on living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 (including EYFS)

Introduction

As pupils and students return to school following the Christmas break, UKHSA is reminding people that winter illnesses continue to circulate at high levels.

UKHSA advice remains clear that children can continue to attend as normal unless they are unwell and/or have a high temperature. [Further information](#) on when a child is too ill for school or nursery is available. There is no requirement to be absent from school on a precautionary basis.

As we learn to live safely with COVID-19, there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and passing it on to others. These actions will also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections. COVID-19 and other respiratory infections such as flu can spread easily and cause serious illness in some people.

This policy reflects both government guidelines and the nature of our school setting informed by our risk assessment.

We encourage you to let us know if you have any concerns, have identified any potential risks, or have any suggestions for further adaptations we can make - you can do this by raising concerns or making suggestions to any of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Overriding Essential measures

Whilst the operational guidance for schools from the Government has been withdrawn we will be keeping the below key measures in place:

1. We are minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to attend school stay at home until they no longer have a high temperature or no longer feel unwell.
2. We are washing hands thoroughly more often than usual (including at the end of the day)
3. We are ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
4. We continue with enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces, using standard products such as detergents and anti-bacterial products.
5. We are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary
6. We are ventilating rooms effectively by opening windows and doors whilst maintaining a comfortable temperature and secure environment.

The main symptoms of coronavirus, 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

The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, including Scarlet Fever 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.

Children and staff who are unwell and have a high temperature should rest at home and avoid contact with other people. They will be able to return to school when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.

If your child is displaying any signs of a cold or any of the above please consider others in your class. If your child has a constantly running nose or is generally feeling under the weather it might be advisable to keep your child at home until their symptoms have cleared, thus reducing the spread of germs.

It is still mandatory to keep a child at home for 48 hours if your child has been sick or has diarrhoea.

Prevention: The following measures are in place:-

- 1) We are minimising contact with individuals who are unwell by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and/or have tested positive do not attend school.
- 2) We are washing hands thoroughly more often than usual (including at the end of the day)
- 3) We are ensuring good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- 4) We continue with enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces, using standard products such as detergents and anti-bacterial products.
- 5) We are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) where necessary.
- 6) We are ventilating rooms effectively by opening windows and doors whilst maintaining a comfortable temperature and secure environment.

NB Staff with serious underlying health conditions who were previously advised to shield against coronavirus should take extra protective measures in line with advice from their medical practitioners. Staff in other vulnerable groups, such as pregnant workers and those aged 70 or over will continue to take medical advice individually about potential adaptations to their role.

Clean hands thoroughly more often than usual

Coronavirus (COVID-19) along with other respiratory diseases is an easy virus to kill when it is on skin. This can be done with soap and running water or hand sanitiser (only to be used where washing is not available). Staff must ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly, including when they arrive at school, when they return from breaks, before and after eating and before they go home. Regular and thorough hand cleaning will be ongoing.

Ensure good respiratory hygiene by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. As with hand cleaning, we will ensure younger children and those with complex needs are helped to get this right, and all children understand that this is now part of how school operates. Each classroom has a foot operated pedal bin which is exclusively used for spent tissues to control germs.

Continuation of enhanced cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces using standard products, such as detergents and bleach

This includes:

- frequently touched surfaces
- toilets will be cleaned regularly and pupils must be encouraged to clean their hands thoroughly after using the toilet

Ensure good ventilation throughout the school

We will ensure there is good ventilation across the school and in classrooms whilst maintaining a comfortable teaching environment.

Measures for arriving at and leaving school

Staggered arrival and departure times will remain in place, not only will this reduce crowding it will make parking around the school easier. Arrivals will be based on surname. Departure times will be based on key stage. Parents are reminded about the process that has been agreed for drop off and collection, including that gathering at the school gates and otherwise coming onto the site without an appointment is not allowed.

Other considerations

Visitors to the site, such as contractors, will be minimised and the school's control measures will be fully communicated. Where visits can happen outside of school hours, they should. A record will be kept of all visitors in the Visitors Book.

Response to any infection

If a child is awaiting collection due to suspected symptoms, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. If they need to go to the toilet while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate toilet if possible. The toilet must be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else and all touch surfaces must be sanitised.

NB Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves.

Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household antibacterial cleaner after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

Actions for suspected or positive cases of COVID-19.

If a child or member of staff has symptoms of a respiratory infection such as COVID-19 and has a high temperature they should:

- Rest at home and avoid contact with other people.
- Only return to school when they no longer have a temperature provided they are not unwell in any other way.

The Government are not recommending that children are tested for COVID-19 unless directed by a health professional. If they do test positive they should:

- Rest at home and avoid contact with other people for three full days following the day they took the test.
- Only return to school if after the three full days they feel well and do not have a high temperature.

If a member of staff has a positive COVID-19 test result they should:

- Stay at home and avoid contact with other people for five days after the day they took their test.
- Only return to work if after the five full days they feel well and do not have a high temperature.
- Avoid meeting people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19, especially those whose immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination, for 10 days after the day you took their test.

Containing any outbreak by implementing our contingency plans

If we have a substantial increase in confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, we may have an outbreak. We will continue to work with our local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required in line with our contingency plans

Additional control measures will be introduced which may include, but are not limited to:

- Re-introduction of bubbles
- The wearing of face masks
- The use of remote learning for distinct groups of children

Attendance

Attendance is now mandatory. When children are absent from school because they are unwell, we would like them to rest and recover, returning to school as soon as possible.

- Work will only be set if children have tested positive for COVID-19 and are isolating without symptoms.
- Live lessons will no longer be available from home.
- However a live drop in will be provided at the end of each day to discuss work set by class teachers.

The Curriculum

- The curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects
- Remote education, where needed, will be high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision.
- Teachers are not expected to teach from home after testing positive. We ask for an email outline of timings and planning for the day if possible. If the teacher is too unwell, cover staff will use their professional judgement and may use the COVID cover work folder or their own resources. Contact will be limited and the cover teacher will ensure that work is at least marked with initials to show it has been read. Other light touch marking is acceptable.

Travel to and from School

Wash your hands thoroughly when you arrive at work, using the handwashing facilities or hand sanitisers provided. You should also wash your hands thoroughly as soon as you get home from work.

We are keeping our working arrangements under regular review, based on the latest government advice, operational needs, ongoing risk assessments, and how the safeguards are working in practice.

When travelling abroad we expect people to follow current government advice on quarantining and testing where necessary.

Written by	SLT
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Further information about coronavirus can be found on the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19>