



Test and Trace

23 September 2020

Dear parents and guardians,

This is an important letter to share some information on how we can work together to make sure we can continue to give children and young people the best education in the safest way possible.

One important part of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils, parents and our communities is testing for coronavirus. We all have a duty to make sure that the right people have access to get tested at the right time. Every time a test is used inappropriately, a person with Covid-19 symptoms may miss out on getting tested.

Therefore, I ask that you all follow these principles:

- You should only book a test if your child has any of these three coronavirus symptoms:
 1. **a high temperature:** any new high temperature where your child feels hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure the temperature)
 2. **a new continuous cough:** coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
 3. **a loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste:** a noticeable loss of smell or taste or things smell and taste different to normal
- Your child **does not need a test** if they have a runny nose, are sneezing or feeling unwell but do not have a temperature, cough or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste because these are not normally symptoms of coronavirus.
- If you are unsure about whether to get a test, please check the official list of symptoms on the NHS website, which is reviewed regularly:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/
- Only the person with symptoms should get a test. You do not need to get a test for anyone else in the household unless they also have any of the three symptoms listed above. All members of the household need to self-isolate whilst waiting for the test result.

- If the person with symptoms' test comes back positive, other members of their household should continue self-isolating for 14 days and **only get a test if they develop coronavirus symptoms.**
- If a pupil in a class or bubble tests positive for coronavirus, anyone who is advised to self-isolate **does not require a test unless they subsequently develop symptoms.**

No one else in the same class or bubble as the symptomatic person needs to take any action unless advised by the school. Schools have detailed guidance and access to a Department for Education and Public Health England helpline for advice and support.

Contacts of a person who has tested positive must follow the guidance carefully and in full, which means they must stay at home for 14 days. This is because it can take several days following contact with an infected person before an individual develops symptoms or the virus can be detected. Students should only book a test if they get symptoms.

The NHS has produced some guidance to help parents understand when their child can and cannot attend school which you may find useful: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

It is vital for children's learning and future opportunities that they are able to return to school and college. It is therefore vitally important that all we work together and do our bit to make this possible.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Viv Bennett CBE

Chief Nurse and Director Maternity and
Early Years | Public Health England

Head of World Health Organisation
Collaborating Centre for Public Health
Nursing and Midwifery

Follow me on Twitter: @VivJBennett



Dr Susan Hopkins

Interim Chief Medical Officer |
NHS Test & Trace

Deputy Director | Public Health England

Consultant in Infectious Diseases &
Microbiology
Royal Free, London

Covid-19 related pupil absence

A reference guide for parents and school / setting staff (as of 16th September 2020)

What to do if...	Action Needed	Return to school when....
<p>... my child has developed one or more Covid-19 symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a new continuous cough a high temperature a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school or setting → Contact school or setting to inform us → Child to get a test via nhs.uk online or by calling 119 → Members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. See Stay at Home guidance → Inform the school or setting immediately about the test results → If after 10 days, your child still has a temperature they should continue to self-isolate and seek medical advice 	<p>...the test comes back negative or a period of 10 days has passed since the symptoms started, the child feels well and does not have a temperature.</p>
<p>... my child tests positive for Covid -19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school or setting → Contact school or setting to inform us → Agree the earliest date for the possible return (minimum 10 days) → Members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. See Stay at Home guidance 	<p>...10 days have passed since symptoms began, even if they still have a cough or loss of taste/smell (these symptoms can last for several weeks) AND the child feels well</p>
<p>... my child tests negative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Contact school or setting to inform us → Discuss when your child can come back (same day/ next day) → Subject to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> everyone they live with who has symptoms tests negative everyone in their support bubble who has symptoms tests negative they are not a contact of a confirmed case they are well – if they feel unwell, stay at home until feeling better 	<p>...the test comes back negative</p>
<p>... my child is ill with symptoms not linked to Covid-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Contact school or setting to inform us → Ring on each day of illness 	<p>...after 48 hours following the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea (as per the attendance policy).</p>
<p>...someone in my household has Covid-19 symptoms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school or setting → Contact school or setting to inform us → Members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. See Stay at Home guidance → Household member to get a test via nhs.uk online or by calling 119 → Inform the school or setting immediately about the test results 	<p>...the test comes back negative</p>
<p>... someone in my household tests positive for Covid-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school or setting → Contact school or setting to inform us → Agree the earliest date for the possible return (minimum 14 days) → Members of the household should self-isolate for 14 days. See Stay at Home guidance 	<p>...my child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.</p>

... NHS test and trace has identified my child as a close contact of a confirmed positive case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school → Contact school to inform us → Agree the earliest date for the possible return (minimum 14 days) 	...my child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
... NHS test and trace has identified a household member (not my child) as a close contact of a confirmed positive case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The household member must self-isolate for 14 days → Child can continue to attend school 	...child(ren) can continue to attend school.
...my child has been identified as a close contact of a confirmed positive case within school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → You will receive a letter of notification from school → Child must not come to school → Support your child at home with any remote education provided by your school. → Your child will need to self-isolate for 14 days. → Other siblings may continue to attend school 	...my child has completed 14 days of self-isolation.
... my child's sibling at another school has been sent home to self-isolate due to being a contact of a confirmed positive case in their school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The sibling must self-isolate for 14 days → Child(ren) at this school can continue to attend. 	...child(ren) can continue to attend school.
... my child has travelled abroad from a country or territory that is NOT one of the exempt list of countries. (i.e. they need to self-isolate after returning from this country).	<p>If returning from a destination where quarantine IS needed please see full travel guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Minimum of 14 days self-isolation for all those who travelled. → Contact school to inform us you are back in the country and we will agree an earliest date for possible return to school 	... the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed.
... my child has travelled abroad from a country or territory that IS one of the exempt list of countries. (i.e. they do NOT need to self-isolate after returning from this country).	<p>If returning from a destination where quarantine is NOT needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Check the current Exempt Countries and Territories list to confirm the country you have travelled from or through is on the exempt list. → Ring school to inform us you have returned to the UK and agree a return date to school. 	...you have informed the school or setting office of your return (they may ask you a few questions about your travel).
...I have travelled from a country that requires us to quarantine (but my child didn't travel).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → As long as you do not have/ have not had symptoms in the last 14 days, your child can continue to attend school. → The person who has travelled MUST NOT leave the house, including to do pick-ups and drop offs 	...child(ren) can continue to attend school.
...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Do not come to school. → Contact school to inform us. → Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again. 	<p>... school inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again</p> <p>...you receive medical advice that your child may return to school.</p>
...I am unable to get a test for someone in the household who has symptoms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → If you are unable to get a test, your child and anyone they live with must continue to self-isolate for 14 days. Anyone in your support bubble must also stay at home. 	... the child has completed 14 days of isolation.