



## Protocol for responding to suspected Coronavirus symptoms

The government guidance sets out the action to be taken in response to any infection in points 7 – 9 of <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

This protocol should be read in conjunction with the Trust's: *Advice for individuals with suspected COVID-19 symptoms*

### Action to be taken should a child become unwell with the symptoms of coronavirus while at school:

#### The symptoms of Coronavirus

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are 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)

The child **must** be sent home (collected by parents or carers) **as soon as possible** and parents or carers be advised to follow staying at home guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The child **must not** use public transport or school transport

**If a staff member suspects that a child has the symptoms of Coronavirus, they should remain socially distant and not to attempt to investigate further the symptoms themselves.**

- They should telephone for assistance to the Main Office / Reception who will summon a trained First Aider to come to the child
- The Main Office / Reception will inform the Headteacher immediately
- Under the direction of the Headteacher, the parents or carers of the child will be contacted to collect their child from school as soon as possible
- The reporting staff member should ensure that their classroom remains fully ventilated
- The First Aider will need to wear PPE and will come to the classroom to collect the child as soon as they have they are appropriately attired
- The Site Team will be asked to thoroughly clean and disinfect the area (the remaining class members and the staff member may need to be relocated to another classroom whilst this happens)

#### First Aiders attending a child with suspected symptoms of Coronavirus

First Aiders will have received training on the wearing of PPE and the protocols for dealing with a child with suspected symptoms.

A First Aider will be called by Reception/ Main Office to attend a child with suspected Coronavirus symptoms.

- The staff member calling for assistance must make it clear to the First Aider that the child is presenting with suspected Coronavirus symptoms.
- The First Aider will need to collect a set of the prescribed PPE and wear all aspects of it prior to going to the child and continue to wear PPE during all contact with the child.

#### **How should PPE be worn?**

*When PPE is used, it is essential that it is used properly. This includes scrupulous hand hygiene and following guidance on how to put PPE on and take it off safely in order to reduce self-contamination.*

*Face masks must:*

- *cover both nose and mouth*
- *not be allowed to dangle around the neck*
- *not be touched once put on, except when carefully removed before disposal*
- *be changed when they become moist or damaged*
- *be worn once and then discarded - hands must be cleaned after disposal*

*PHE has produced useful poster for putting on and removing PPE for health and social care settings:*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/877658/Quick\\_guide\\_to\\_donning\\_doffing\\_standard\\_PPE\\_health\\_and\\_social\\_care\\_poster\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877658/Quick_guide_to_donning_doffing_standard_PPE_health_and_social_care_poster_.pdf)

*DFE guidance "Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)*

- The First Aider should **not** attempt to investigate the symptoms further and should not have direct contact with or be within the 2m social distance of the child unless absolutely necessary.
- The First Aider will bring the child to the designated area.
- The designated area should be a room where they can be isolated, behind a closed door, with, if possible, a window open for ventilation.
- Depending on the age of the child, adult supervision may be required. In which case the room should be large enough to allow for social distancing, be extremely well ventilated and the supervising adult needs to be wearing PPE.
- If it is not possible to isolate the child, they should be moved to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.
- If the child needs to use the toilet whilst waiting to be collected, a separate bathroom should be used, if possible. The toilet will need to be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before anyone else uses it.
- In an emergency, call 999 if the child is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.
- The First Aider or adult who has helped someone with Coronavirus symptoms do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves
- The First Aider or supervising adult should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.
- PPE should be disposed of after the child has left the site and **not** reused (except safety glasses which should be disinfected).
- The affected areas should be cleaned with normal household disinfectant after the child has left the site as detailed in the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

***If a child reports as feeling unwell with suspected Coronavirus symptoms outside of a lesson / classroom setting, staff members should follow the same protocols as detailed about and call for assistance to the Main Office / Reception or if the child is reporting to the Main Office / Reception, call for a First Aider.***

### **Parents and carers collecting a child with suspected Coronavirus symptoms**

- Parents and carers will be informed that their child is unwell with suspected Coronavirus symptoms. They will be asked to collect the child and return the child home as soon as possible.
- The child must be collected and cannot use public transport or school transport to travel home
- Parents and carers will need to follow the school's arrangements for coming onto the school site and will need to respect social distancing at all times.
- Parents will be advised by the school to follow <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance> and to ensure that the child is tested for the virus.

To access testing <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>

- Parents must report the outcome of the test (positive or negative) to the school as soon as possible. The child cannot return to school whilst waiting for the outcome of the test nor if the test is positive. The school will need to see the official test outcome prior to the child returning to school.

### **What happens if a staff member reports feeling unwell with suspected Coronavirus symptoms during the working day?**

The staff member should be isolated in school until they can leave the school site; this should be as soon as possible. They should not use public transport to travel home.

They should be given the same advice as given to parents and carers about following government guidance and accessing a test. They will need to report the test outcome to their employer. If the test is negative, they can return to work once the employer has seen a copy of the test outcome.

Staff who feel unwell with suspected Coronavirus symptoms whilst at home should report their absence from work in the normal way. They should inform the school of their suspected Coronavirus symptoms, follow government guidance and arrange to access a test. They should report the outcome of the test to their employer. If the test is negative, they can return to work once the employer has seen a copy of the test outcome.

## What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus at school?

The government guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>) says:

### What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus in a setting?

Schools must take swift action when they become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools should contact the local health protection team. This team will also contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by NHS Test and Trace.

The health protection team will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. The health protection team will work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take. Based on the advice from the health protection team, schools must send home those people who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual for any length of time, within 1 metre, including being coughed on, a face to face conversation, or unprotected physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- proximity contacts - extended close contact (within 1 to 2 metres for more than 15 minutes) with an infected individual
- travelling in a small vehicle, like a car, with an infected person

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home. To support them in doing so, we recommend schools keep a record of pupils and staff in each group, and any close contact that takes place between children and staff in different groups (see [section 5 of system of control](#) for more on grouping pupils). This should be a proportionate recording process. Schools do not need to ask pupils to record everyone they have spent time with each day or ask staff to keep definitive records in a way that is overly burdensome.

A template letter will be provided to schools, on the advice of the health protection team, to send to parents and staff if needed. Schools must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a class or group that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period. This is because they could still develop the coronavirus (COVID-19) within the remaining days.
- if the test result is positive, they should inform their setting immediately, and should isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms (which could mean the self-isolation ends before or after the original 14-day isolation period). Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms, following '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)'

Schools should not request evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Further guidance is available on [testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

*which will reduce risk of transmission. closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.*

### **Contain any outbreak by following local health protection team advice**

If schools have two or more confirmed cases within 14 days, or an overall rise in sickness absence where coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected, they may have an outbreak, and must continue to work with their local health protection team who will be able to advise if additional action is required.

In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. If schools are implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within the school will not generally be necessary, and should not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams.

In consultation with the local Director of Public Health, where an outbreak in a school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary, in line with routine public health outbreak control practice.

More information on the government's test and trace programme can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

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