

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Guidance

Local Outbreak Control

Response to COVID-19 symptoms and cases in School/Education Setting

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



Supporting you in managing Health, Safety & Wellbeing



1. Introduction

The main way to keep the school/education environment safe, is to prevent children and staff coming to the school who may be carrying the virus.

Acting quickly and seeking advice and support as soon as you become aware that people in the setting are symptomatic or when the setting has a single positive case can help mitigate and prevent transmission.

All settings are likely to have to manage symptomatic and positive cases in their setting at some point and therefore being prepared, knowing the key actions to take and how to seek advice and support is important.

Working with the Local Outbreak Control response team will result in the right mitigation actions being taken early to manage any incident effectively and ensure all staff, parents and children/young people understand what is required.

2. National Guidance

National Guidance on Local Outbreaks sets out four tiers of restrictions for schools and colleges, to be used as an “absolute last resort” in areas under local lockdown.

What measures are in place for tier one

All schools remain open in the first tier, with the only difference being that face coverings should be worn by staff and pupils when moving around, such as in corridors and communal areas if determined by Local School Risk Assessment (Year 7 and above).

Local authorities and directors of public health, alongside national Government, will be at the centre of deciding when to move out of tier one, according to the Department for Education (DfE).

What happens in tier two

Guidance says all other measures, including restrictions on other sectors, will be taken into consideration before restricting attendance in schools.

If these have been exhausted, extra measures should kick in at the second tier, when secondary schools move to a “rota system”.

Tier two only applies to secondary settings as primary schools and younger children play a limited role in transmission.

How does a rota system work

The system will reduce how many people students come into contact with, helping to break transmission chains by pupils giving enough time at home for symptoms to become apparent.

Schools should ideally operate a rota system that means pupils spend two weeks on-site followed by two weeks at home. However, schools can choose to operate a one-week rota (so, five days on-site, followed by nine days at home) if this is necessary for the effective delivery of the curriculum.

What is expected in tier three

Tiers three and four introduce studying at home full time for wider groups of pupils.

Most secondary school students would study from home in the third tier, excluding vulnerable pupils, children of key workers and selected year groups.

Then what happens in the fourth and final tier

All nurseries, childminders, mainstream schools, colleges and other educational establishments can only allow vulnerable children and those whose parents are key workers to attend

3. Purpose of the document

This document sets out the actions that schools/education settings and others should take where members of the school community have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.

This document is informed by the DfE Guidance for full opening: schools which is aimed at schools full opening from the beginning of the autumn term (2020).

It sets out four sets of scenarios:

Scenario A: Where one person within a school community has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Scenario B: Where two or more people within a school community have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Scenario C: Geographical community coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Scenario D: Staffordshire-wide coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Scenario A: Where one person within a school community has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms

Staying away from school

Any member of the school community (pupils, staff and other adults) should not come into school if they:

- Have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms.
- Have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 10 days.
- Are in a household (or support bubble) with individuals who have been tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) in the last 14 days.
- Have been contacted through the NHS Test and Trace/ Local Authority Local Outbreak Control and been advised to stay at home (14 days since contact with positive case).

Where a member of the school community has developed symptoms whilst in school

The school should take the following actions:

- Send the person home if they develop a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or have a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).
- Contact the parents or carers of the children/young person affected to arrange for them to be collected.
- If the situation is an emergency and the individual is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk call 999.
- If you are unclear of what to do regarding symptoms, call 111 or access the online 111 Coronavirus advice service.
- Whilst the child/young person is awaiting collection, take them to a room where they can be isolated, ideally behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Open a window for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, take them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people. The person supervising should wear personal protective equipment (gloves, apron, fluid resistant surgical mask and visor if risk of droplet e.g. coughing) whilst caring for the child/young person. Clean and disinfect the bathroom using a detergent followed by a disinfectant (with at least 1,000 ppm chlorine) before it is used by anyone else.
- Take similar, appropriate action for an adult who becomes unwell
- If more than one person develops symptoms, they should be isolated separately
- If the individual with symptoms needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom (if possible). Clean and disinfect the bathroom using a detergent followed by a disinfectant (with at least 1,000 ppm chlorine) before it is used by anyone else.
- Make sure that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn by staff caring for any individual with symptoms while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance.

- The school should inform the individual and their parent/guardian (for children and young people) that they must book a COVID-19 test immediately by phoning 119 or through the online portal, and that the individual must notify the school of the outcome of the tests immediately. A home test kit may be offered to individuals who have developed symptoms while at school in the exceptional circumstance where it is believed they may have barriers to accessing a test elsewhere, and that giving them a home test kit directly will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested.
- Report the case to Health Protection Team in Public Health England by phoning 0344 225 3560 (option 0 option 2) or use the online reporting system. PHE West Midlands Health Protection Team using the Online reporting system: <https://surveys.phe.org.uk/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n4KL97m2l>

AND

- Report the case/s immediately to the local authority to the Council's Covid-19 Local Outbreak Coordinating Team using the Webform: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Coronavirus/Professional-Referral/Professional-referral-form.aspx> or Email: C19LocalOutbreakControl@staffordshire.gov.uk

Where one person is showing symptoms, members of the school community do not need to self-isolate:

This includes

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms (whilst wearing PPE and have managed to maintain 2m social distancing)

Any pupils who have been in close contact with the person showing symptoms.

Unless:

they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should self- isolate and arrange a test)

- OR

if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below),

- OR

they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace

Cleaning

Following the identification of the person with COVID-19 symptoms, clean and disinfect:

- All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with, including objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids; and
- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells

In addition:

- Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below (when there has been a symptomatic case in the school):

a) a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine or;

b) household detergent followed by disinfection (the disinfectant should have at least 1000 parts per million chlorine). Note: if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses.

Waste

Any waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues), should be:

- Put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. That plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.
- Stored safely and kept away from children. Waste should not be put in communal waste areas for at least 72 hours. It can then be disposed of normally.

Infection prevention and control precautions

Infection prevention and control precautions should continue to be implemented including:

- Good hand hygiene before entering and after leaving the setting, as well as regularly throughout the day.
- Ensuring that everyone (staff and pupils) catch coughs and sneezes in tissues. If a tissue is not available, then the crook of the elbow should be used rather than hands.
- Dispose of tissues promptly in a waste bin and then perform hand hygiene.

Further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Actions following the outcome of coronavirus (COVID-19) test result

Finding out the test result

The person who has been tested (for a child/young person this will be their parent/carer) will be sent their own test results directly within 24-48 hours (which they should then communicate with the school).

The person sent home (or who has stayed away from school) should:

- Follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection',
- Self-isolate for at least 10 days and until well (including no fever for 48 hours). The result of the test may change this isolation period a little (see below for test results)

Other members of their household (including any siblings) should:

- Self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms. The result of the test may change this isolation period a little (see below for test results)
- Arrange to have a test if they develop COVID-19 symptoms. Tests can be booked online through the online portal or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.

Actions following a NEGATIVE test result

a) What the individual person should do

If the person with symptoms tests negative for COVID-19, they are allowed to return to school if they are well, including not having a temperature for 48 hours AND all in their household who have COVID-19 symptoms have also tested negative. (This is important as there remains some risk of false negatives). Their household can also stop isolating if those criteria are met.

Important If the individual tests negative and they are a contact of a confirmed case, they must continue to self-isolate for the full 14 days, as they are a contact of a confirmed case (please see below for further detail).

b) What the school should do

No further action is needed by the school. Support any vulnerable child self-isolating as a contact of a confirmed case and all children self-isolating through access to online learning set out in the guidance.

Actions following a POSITIVE test result

a) What the person should do following a positive test result

- Follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school only if they are well (and have not had a high temperature for 48 hours) - note that symptoms of a cough or loss of sense of smell/taste may persist, as they can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill. Or the date of the test if asymptomatic
- Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days. Even if they test negative.

b) What the school and the Education Local Outbreak Control Team /Health Protection Team should do following a positive test result

The school should (even if suspected case has already been reported):

Report the case to Health Protection Team in Public Health England by phoning 0344 225 3560 (option 0 option 2) or use the online reporting system. PHE West Midlands Health Protection Team using the Online reporting system: <https://surveys.phe.org.uk/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n4KL97m2l>

AND

- Report the case immediately to the to the Council’s Covid-19 Local Outbreak Co-ordinating Team using the Webform: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Coronavirus/Professional-Referral/Professional-referral-form.aspx> or Email: C19LocalOutbreakControl@staffordshire.gov.uk

Further information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-COVID-19/testing-and-tracing/what-your-test-result-means/>

The Education Local Outbreak Team/ PHE Health Protection Team will:

- Contact schools directly if they become aware that someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) attended the school – as identified by local information and/or NHS Test and Trace.
- Carry out a risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious (from 2 days before they developed symptoms and for the duration of their illness), and ensure they are asked to self-isolate.
- Work with schools in this situation to guide them through the actions they need to take, **including definitive advice on who must be sent home**. This will be informed by the record that schools have of pupils and staff in each group and any close contact that takes place between children and staff in different groups.
- An Incident Management Team meeting maybe called with multiagency representation to assess and determine actions.
- Provide a template letter to send to parents and staff if needed and assess if any media support is required.

The school should then (based on the advice from the Education Local Outbreak Team):

- 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.

Where pupils are asked to self-isolate the school will need to make arrangements to provide access to online learning as set out in the [Guidance for full opening: schools](#)

c) What household members of contacts who are sent home should do

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.**d) What others who have been asked to self-isolate should do**

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’. and they should also get a test, and:

- If the test result is negative, 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. Household contacts can, however, stop self-isolating if they are well.

- If the test result is positive, they should inform their school immediately, and must isolate for at least 10 days (and until well and have not had a high temperature for 48 hours) 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'
- If household members are self-isolating, 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.

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

Action

Communicate with parents/carers and staff (e.g. by letter). Do not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless it is essential to protect others.

Note that it is recommended that 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.

Additional information - when household members are self-isolating

Schools may become aware that members of pupils' household are self-isolating following a request from track and trace/Local Authority Outbreak Control or after travel. This situation will not normally require the pupil to self-isolate unless somebody in the household develops symptoms. However, some consideration is required regarding the practicalities and effectiveness of self-isolation where there are individuals requiring care (young children) and the main or only carer in the household is required to self-isolate. In these circumstances the school should discuss the circumstances with the Education Local Outbreak Control Team.

Scenario B: Where two or more people in a school community have COVID-19 symptoms (an “outbreak”)

This scenario is defined where there are two (or more) epidemiologically linked people with either COVID-19 symptoms and/or who are confirmed COVID-19 cases, and who have both been in the school (on the school site) within the last 14 days. i.e. the cases have had contact. These two people could be a combination of children and/or school staff. These two people could be part of the same group (bubbles) or separate groups (bubbles) across the school.

This scenario is defined as an “outbreak”.

What the school should do

The school must take the following steps at the point that the individuals become unwell.

The school should not wait for any test results.

- Where the individuals are in school, support them in the way that is done for individuals (as set out earlier in this document). Note that individuals who are unwell should be isolated separately.
- Report the case to Health Protection Team in Public Health England by phoning 0344 225 3560 (option 0 option 2) or use the online reporting system.

PHE West Midlands Health Protection Team using the **Online reporting system:**

<https://surveys.phe.org.uk/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=n4KL97m2l>

AND

- Report the outbreak immediately to the Council’s Covid-19 Local Outbreak Co-ordinating Team using the Webform: <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Coronavirus/Professional-Referral/Professional-referral-form.aspx> or Email: C19LocalOutbreakControl@staffordshire.gov.uk

What the Local Outbreak Control Team / Health Protection Team will do

- Work with the school and gather information from the school to inform a risk assessment. This may involve asking the school to complete a data return and include: the set-up of the school, total number of staff and students confirmed or symptomatic, vulnerability of student population, potential number of contacts and current social distancing and infection prevention control measures.
- Discuss how the school are implementing social distancing and infection, prevention and control (IPC) measures, and provide advice as required.
- Undertake a risk assessment to consider the severity and spread of outbreak, current control measures and the wider context (including communications from the school, anxiety level amongst students, staff and families, media interest etc.).
- Help the school to identify contacts who need to isolate (any symptomatic contacts will be advised to access testing). In some cases, they may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure.

- An Incident Management Team meeting may be called with multiagency representation to assess and determine actions.
- Provide schools with letters to be sent to contacts and non-contacts.
- Where appropriate arrange multi agency meetings to ensure that the response to the outbreak is co-ordinated and proportionate.
- May advise widespread swabbing of staff and the student population. Further actions may, however, be taken on the results). Arranging this will require discussion with partners in the local system.

Potential outcomes

- School remains open (school communicates with parents, aided by letters provided by LA/PHE). This will be the situation in the majority of cases, where schools are addressing risks and implementing controls.

If the school is **maintained**, and the LA/PHE risk assessment suggests that further action may be required to control the outbreak over and above initial measures outlined above;

- The governing body are given control of the use and occupation of premises and will make further decisions, including restriction and/or closure, based upon the health and safety of pupils.
- The Local Authority can also direct a school to take specific actions / direct restrictions or closure on the grounds of health and safety, if required, or use local outbreak control powers.
- The Secretary of State can direct school closure if required.

If the school is **non-maintained** (Trust/Academy/Free School), and the LA/PHE risk assessment suggests that further action may be required to control the outbreak over and above initial measures outlined above;

- The academy trust are given control of the use and occupation of premises and will make further decisions, including around restrictions and/or closure, based upon the health and safety of pupils.
- the Local Authority advises the school to implement restrictions or close.

- Should the school decide not to close, the Local Authority will inform the RSC and can apply local outbreak powers for actions to be taken.

- The Secretary of State can direct school closure if required.

Scenario C: Geographical community COVID-19 outbreak

In this scenario, a “geographical community” is defined as a locality or neighbourhood within Staffordshire (or the locality of the school if close to county boundary). Please note that these geographical communities may span administrative boundaries such as wards but may have more than one school in this area and potentially include primary and secondary schools. The scenario would be where there are a high and increasing number of cases (i.e. the reproduction rate is increasing) within a defined geographical context and there are cases across more than one school.

Actions for the school

Headteachers in the geographical area would work collaboratively with the Health Protection Board (HPB) to ensure all key infection control actions were being taken, with regard to organisation measures to support social distancing, as well as handwashing and cleaning.

Where schools place restrictions on attendance they should be prepared to arrange online learning immediately for those pupils unable to attend school as set out in the guidance for full opening: schools

Actions for others

The HPB would require the support of local infection control, school leaders, business leaders, and district councils and would follow outbreak management steps:

- Understand the data regarding hotspot areas and trends – analysis by time, place, person.
- Implement immediate control measures – e.g. community engagement regarding social distancing, supporting handwashing and cleaning measures, isolation of symptomatic individuals and their contacts.
- Monitor impact of control measures and evaluate hypotheses for spread.

Should routine control measures not be effective, the HPB would review the need for one or more specific restrictions or closures (these decisions would be taken on a case by case basis with each school in the geographical area or that has an outbreak. More widespread closure which would be an intervention of last resort) may be necessary ultimately to contain spread.

At this stage the Emergency Planning response structures within the council and with multi-agency partners including regional DfE would be stood up to support management of the outbreak, and any wider “lockdown” measures that would be required.

Potential outcomes

Following the actions set out above, there could be the following outcomes (likely in combination with wider outcome for the local area)

- The LA to direct all maintained schools in the geographical community to implement restrictions/ close, based on Public Health guidance.

- The LA to advise all non-maintained schools to implement restrictions/close in the geographical community based on Public Health advice (should schools opt not to follow advice formal directions/enforcement action will be considered).
- School(s) could remain open if the thresholds for action were not considered, by Public Health, to be met.

Note: “closure” could mean a full school closure or a closure as for the first national lockdown (March 2020), where vulnerable children and children of key workers still had the opportunity to attend schools.

“Restrictions” could be the self isolation of a school bubble/group(s), pupils from identified wards/postcodes or other suitable controls.

Scenario D: COVID-19 outbreak across Staffordshire

In this scenario, the scope would be across all of Staffordshire, including all Staffordshire state-funded schools. The scenario would be where there are a high and increasing number of cases (i.e. the reproduction rate is increasing) across Staffordshire and there are increasing cases in schools.

Actions for the school

Staffordshire schools would work collaboratively with the HPB/PHE follow public health advice given (as for scenario C).

Where schools place restrictions on attendance they should be prepared to arrange online learning immediately for those pupils unable to attend school as set out in the guidance for full opening: schools

Actions for others

At this stage, a much wider response will be required, involving not just a local outbreak control team, but the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum (membership consisting of Police, Fire Service, Ambulance Service, NHS, PHE, DfE, Military, Utilities), which would support the mobilisation of resource to support the emergency response. An internal Incident Management Team would be set up to support the emergency response of the widespread increase in cases.

Potential outcomes

Following the actions set out above, there could be the following outcomes (in combination with wider outcomes for the local areas:

- The LA to direct all maintained schools to take actions or close, based on Public Health guidance.
- The LA to advise all other schools to take actions or close, based on Public Health guidance.

Should schools opt not close – further formal action (as outlined in scenario C) will be taken.

- It should be noted that in a scenario such as the one described closure of workplaces in the first instance etc may be more effective in reducing spread.
- School(s) could remain open if the thresholds for action were not considered, by Public Health, to be met.
- Note the Secretary of State for Education could direct a school to close temporarily.

Note: “closure” could mean a full school closure or a closure as for the first national lockdown (March 2020), where vulnerable children and children of key workers still had the opportunity to attend schools.

Useful Documents

1. Keeping you safe in school: Do not come into school in these scenarios.



1. Do not come to school in these scenar

2. How to get tested



3. How do I book a test 26082020.docx

3. What to do in an outbreak



What to expect following case or an o

National Reference Documents

Test and Trace - Full Opening of Schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools#section-5-contingency-planning-for-outbreaks>

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-phe-and-nhs-test-and-trace-to-school-and-college-leaders?utm_source=0bfd7edd-ae2a-4b7d-9d18-506077d1a61d&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily

Planning for Tier 2 Restrictions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions/how-schools-can-plan-for-tier-2-local-restrictions>

Action Cards Educational Settings

<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/reporting-an-outbreak/resources/Education-Action-Cards/>

Key Contacts – Staffordshire

Local Outbreak Control - Co-ordinating Function

C19LocalOutbreakControl@staffordshire.gov.uk

**Education and Early Years Local Outbreak Response Team (Please use this as priority method of contact.
Email account is monitored 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am – 4pm at the weekends.
C19LOC.education@staffordshire.gov.uk**

01785355777

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Duty Line

Will take a message for the LOC Team and the Out of hours mobile number is provided on the voice message.

Actions to be taken Symptomatic and Trace Close Contact

