

Appendix B General guidance for communicating with parents and carers following a confirmed COVID-19 case in your school community

During this next phase of response to the COVID-19 pandemic, educational settings are being asked to recognise that COVID-19 will be a feature of our lives for the foreseeable future, so we need to learn to live with it and manage the risk to ourselves and others, while also prioritising educational continuity for children and young people. This has implications for the tone and frequency of communications about COVID-19 to parents and carers and means that such communications will also be highly contextual to each setting and its community. Settings will want to balance the expectations of openness in communication whilst not raising unnecessary alarm and anxiety when cases may well be present in the community.

We have provided sample text for communications to parents below as a guide only, and for you to tailor to your circumstances. There is also no expectation or requirement that you use this template and certainly not in response to every COVID-19 case about which you are informed. However, we understand that you may want to send a communication either in advance of cases, or after the first case for some time, or following a change to arrangements for COVID-19 management.

The timing and tone of subsequent communications will be a decision based on the circumstances that prevail in your setting at the time, but we are happy to chat this through if you are unsure as to the approach to take. Should you reach a case threshold that requires further measures locally, developing a communication strategy can be part of the liaison with our local public health and communications teams.

Text that could be adapted for your setting communication to alert your school community

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are writing to inform you that there are likely to be cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) from time to time in this next phase of living with COVID-19 in the community. Please be reassured that for most people, COVID-19 will be a mild illness. The purpose of this communication is to remind you of the importance of all pupils and staff, regardless of age, and their families remaining vigilant regarding COVID-19, and indeed other infections, to protect their own health as well as the health of others around them.

We will not be routinely informing of individual cases as they occur, as this is no longer an expectation. This is because, in line with Government guidelines, we will not be restricting the attendance of close contacts who are under 18 and 6 months or double vaccinated, only those individuals who have symptoms and/or who have tested positive or close contacts over 18 years 6 months who are not double vaccinated. If your child is identified as a close contact of the confirmed case, you may be contacted by NHS Test and Trace who will advise you on what to do next.

However, we are continuing to monitor the situation and will work closely with Public Health England if the number of cases escalates to meet the thresholds for considering further steps. If this occurs, then further measures could be introduced but at this stage this is not deemed necessary. The setting remains open, and your child should continue to attend as normal if they remain well.

Sign off or include links to other information as appropriate to the situation.

At your discretion, you may wish to include all or parts of the information below or links where this can be found:

Further guidance on self-isolation, symptoms to look out for, testing, and how to prevent further spread of COVID-19 are included below.

Close contacts who are not required to self-isolate

You are no longer required to self-isolate if you are notified you have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 and any of the following apply:

- you are fully vaccinated (meaning that you have been vaccinated with an MHRA approved [COVID-19 vaccine](#) in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since you received the recommended doses of that vaccine.
- you are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons.

This means that students who are under the age of 18 years and 6 months or older students who are fully vaccinated can still attend the educational setting if identified as a close contact. However, it is recommended to get a PCR test if the child is over 5 years old and to avoid anyone who is extremely clinically vulnerable during the ten days following their last close contact with the case.

If you are a health or social care worker or student working in health and social care settings who has been identified as a household contact and are exempt from self-isolation, there is [additional guidance available](#) that you should follow to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 in these settings.

Regular asymptomatic testing

All parents are advised to continue with the routine twice weekly asymptomatic LFD COVID-19 testing for themselves and anyone aged 11 and above in their household. Further information about LFT home test kits is available here: [Home test kits | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19

If your child develops [symptoms of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#), they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known. If negative, the child can end self-isolation; if positive, the child should isolate until at least 10 days after their symptoms appeared.

If your child has a positive LFD test result (for children aged 11 and above), they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known.

If your child has a positive PCR test result but does not have [symptoms](#), they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for a PCR test (the normally available test type) and this can be arranged via [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by calling 119.

Instructions for people who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 (tested positive or symptomatic awaiting a PCR test result)

Please see the [stay at home guidance](#) with information of what the household should do and who is exempt from isolation as a close contact. Even if you are exempt it is recommended that close contacts get a PCR test if aged 5 and over, and undertake other measures outlined in the guidance such as limiting contact with anyone who is extremely clinically vulnerable and wear a face covering in enclosed spaces while the person in your household with COVID-19 is self-isolating.

If you develop [symptoms](#) at any time, even if these are mild, self-isolate immediately, [arrange to have a COVID-19 PCR test](#) and follow the [guidance for people with COVID-19 symptoms](#).

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from the nhs.uk website at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>. If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111. In an emergency dial 999.

How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19): [guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread](#)

- get vaccinated – everyone aged 16 and over can [book COVID-19 vaccination appointments](#) now and information on Covid-19 vaccination walk-in clinics [COVID-19 vaccination walk-in clinic](#)
- wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- wear a face covering when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: <https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

Further information

Further information is available at
[https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
Home :: Healthier Together \(what0-18.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/Home::Healthier%20Together%20(what0-18.nhs.uk))