

Responding to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID19 – Schools and Colleges

Updated 19 October

Overview:



Sources: [Full Opening Guidance safe working in education implementing the protective measures in education](#)
Public Health advice
[testing and tracing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

<p>If symptoms develop during the school/college day:</p>	<p>If a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms of the coronavirus, they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate immediately, only leaving the house to access a test.</p> <p>If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, with appropriate adult supervision if required depending on the age of the child. 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.</p> <p>If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.</p> <p>PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if direct personal care is needed and a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs).</p>
<p>If a child/staff member begins displaying symptoms outside of school/college.</p>	<p>The individual must isolate for 10 days (their household for 14 days) or until they receive a negative test. They must not come to school/college. You should encourage them to seek a test and request that they inform you of the outcome of their test.</p> <p>If the individual arrives at school/ college, they should be sent home immediately.</p>
<p>If a student or staff member gets an alert through the NHS COVID-19 app</p>	<p>The NHS COVID-19 app is available to download for anyone over the age of 16. A major function of the app is to automatically alert individuals if they have been in close contact with a confirmed case. It does this by using Bluetooth to assess the distance, over time, between users of the app. Students using the app should be made aware that they should immediately inform a member of staff if they receive an alert.</p> <p>It is possible that whilst in their setting, students or staff members could receive a notification via the app that they have been in close contact with a confirmed case and should therefore self-isolate. These people should be sent home to self-isolate immediately. If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated.</p>

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	<p>No further action is needed unless the person goes on to become a confirmed case themselves, at which point, the reporting procedures described in this document should be followed.</p> <p>This DfE guidance aims to inform school and college leaders what they need to be aware of and what actions they may need to take.</p>
<p>If a pupil or staff member tests positive – identifying others who need to self-isolate.</p>	<p>We are now recommending you contact the Essex Contact Tracing Team (ECTT) for advice and to identify close contacts in the first instance. You can, however, use the DfE advice line if you prefer or if the ECTT does not respond in a timely way.</p> <p>The ECTT will notify Public Health colleagues and the intelligence about your setting will be captured more quickly as well as providing more local and contextual support. Their contact details are:</p> <p>0300 303 2698 provide.escontacttracing@nhs.net Mon-Fri: 8am to 8pm Sat/Sun/BH: 10am to 4pm</p> <p>The team have an answer phone available out of hours. If you leave a message, please be sure to provide a mobile number as well as a school phone number so that the ECTT can call you back as soon as possible (we are aware that some school office phones default to answer phone at the end of the school day).</p> <p>The DfE helpline for advice is 0800 046 8687.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to have information readily available, on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Which children and staff are in which bubbles in school/ college ○ Which children travel to school on home to school transport ○ Which children and staff attend before/after school clubs • If the child has used home to school transport you may need to liaise with the operator directly to ascertain any additional children using the same transport who also need to self-isolate. • You must send home those staff and pupils identified as having been in close contact with the person who has

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	<p>tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person (during the infections period)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are not expected to know which contacts staff or pupils have had outside of school/ college. <p>Please also notify schoolscommunication@essex.gov.uk as we are holding a central log of confirmed cases.</p>
<p>Self-isolation following a positive test</p>	<p>If an individual tests positive they must continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return to school/ college only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal.</p> <p>The 10-day period starts from the day when they first became ill.</p> <p>Other members of their household should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days.</p> <p>‘stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection’</p>
<p>Informing Public Health of positive case/s</p>	<p>We are now recommending you contact the Essex Contact Tracing Team (ECTT) for advice and to identify close contacts in the first instance. You can, however, use the DfE advice line if you prefer or if the ECTT does not respond in a timely way.</p> <p>The ECTT will notify Public Health colleagues and the intelligence about your setting will be captured more quickly as well as providing more local and contextual support. Their contact details are:</p> <p>0300 303 2698 provide.escontacttracing@nhs.net Mon-Fri: 8am to 8pm Sat/Sun/BH: 10am to 4pm</p> <p>The DfE helpline for advice is 0800 046 8687. You will be directed to the dedicated NHS advice team for nurseries, schools and colleges with confirmed cases. The line will be open</p>

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	<p>Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.</p> <p>We also ask that you continue to inform schoolscommunication@essex.gov.uk</p>
<p>Cleaning the area following a case of COVID 19</p>	<p>All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including; bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells.</p> <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine • a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer’s instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants • if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses <p>Areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.</p> <p>Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.</p> <p>Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.</p> <p>The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) is disposable gloves and an apron.</p> <p>Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.</p>
<p>Who should access a test?</p>	<p>The symptomatic individual should access a test as soon as possible.</p> <p>The symptoms for testing are:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature) • new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual) • loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you’ve noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal <p>Contacts of this individual should only access testing if they themselves become symptomatic.</p> <p>If a contact who has been asked to self-isolate, goes on to display symptoms, accesses a test but it is negative – they still cannot return to school/ college until they have completed their 14 days isolation period (this is because they still might go on to become positive during the 14 days).</p>
<p>Accessing testing for staff</p>	<p>We have secured additional local testing capacity for education staff as critical workers. This is specifically for EY, school and FE staff and their families, not for the wider general public.</p> <p>There are different processes in place for different parts of the county. Details can be found in the document titled ‘Additional testing capacity – education staff PowerPoint’ which can be found on schools InfoLink here. This document sets out that prior to using the additional capacity, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try the national testing process first by using the employer portal • Following that, you should attempt to book as an individual online or by phoning 119 • If you have them, you should then use the test kits already provided to you - you can restock them here
<p>Accessing testing for children and individuals:</p>	<p>Anyone with symptoms can get a coronavirus test, whatever their age. Parents should book a test via the NHS testing and tracing for coronavirus website, or order by telephone via 119 for those without access to the internet. People booking online receive a QR code that they must remember to take with them.</p>
<p>Home Testing Kits</p>	<p>All schools have been provided with 10 testing kits that can be given directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed</p>

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	<p>symptoms at school, where you think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested.</p> <p>These kits are not for use by school staff to test children.</p> <p>An online portal is now live for schools and further education (FE) providers to order additional test kits if they have run out, or are running out, of their initial 10 kits.</p> <p>You will be able to make a new order for test kits 21 days after you receive a delivery confirmation email telling you that your previous supply of test kits has been sent.</p> <p>Schools and FE providers will receive a unique organisation number (UON) via email from the Department of Health and Social Care which will be needed to place your order. From 17 September, please call the Test and Trace helpdesk on 119 if you have not received your UON or if you have lost your record of it.</p>
<p>Returning to school/college/work</p>	<p>Where the original individual tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.</p> <p>Where the child/staff member tests positive – they may return to school/ college after 10 days from the onset of their symptoms and then return only if they do not have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell/taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. If they still have a high temperature, they should keep self-isolating until their temperature returns to normal.</p> <p>If someone is symptomatic, tests positive and works with a vulnerable group/individual, who has greater vulnerability than the general population, it is sensible they are excluded for 14 rather than 10 days.</p>
<p>Disposing of waste</p>	<p>To dispose of waste from people with symptoms of coronavirus, such as disposable cleaning cloths, tissues and PPE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put it in a plastic rubbish bag and tie it • place the plastic bag in a second bin bag and tie it • put it in a suitable and secure place marked for storage for 72 hours

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	<p>Waste should be stored safely and securely kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours. Storing for 72 hours saves unnecessary waste movements and minimises the risk to waste operatives. This waste does not require a dedicated clinical waste collection in the above circumstances.</p> <p>If, in an emergency, you need to remove the waste before 72 hours, it must be treated as Category B infectious waste. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keep it separate from your other waste • arrange for collection by a specialist contractor as hazardous waste <p>There will be a charge for this service.</p>
<p>Remote Learning for those self-isolating</p>	<p>Where a pupil is unable to attend school/ college because they, and/or their parents, are complying with clinical or public health advice, schools/ colleges should immediately offer access to remote education.</p> <p>The expectations around remote learning are included in the Remote Education Support Guidance.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

<p>What should I do now to prepare for a potential case of COVID19?</p>	<p>Schools/ colleges should have lists of the following, readily available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which children and staff are allocated to which groups on site (i.e. class groups, or ‘bubbles’) • Which children travel to school on home to school transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This information can be found on Infolink and/or will have been shared with you by the Integrated Passenger Transport Unit at ECC ○ You will need to ensure it is up to date following any changes from Sept
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If known – which transport operator is used ● Which children and staff attend before/after school clubs and which groups they are in for these clubs ● Any close contact that takes places between children and staff in different groups <p>Schools/ colleges should also consider how they will be able to ‘switch on’ remote learning provision for children who are asked to self-isolate, as quickly as possible. Note that these contingency plans are expected to be in place by end of Sept; see DfE Remote Education Support Guidance.</p>
<p>What is defined as a ‘close contact’?</p>	<p>Close contacts are defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● direct close contacts - face to face contact, 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) ● travelling in a small vehicle, like a car
<p>What does the Test and Trace programme mean for schools/colleges?</p>	<p>As part of the national test and trace programme, if cases occur within the school/college community, we are now recommending you contact the Essex Contact Tracing Team (ECTT) for advice and to identify close contacts in the first instance. You can, however, use the DfE advice line if you prefer or if the ECTT does not respond in a timely way.</p> <p>In some cases, a larger number of other children/ young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group.</p> <p>It is not expected that closure of the whole site will be necessary where schools/ colleges are following advice around infection control.</p>
<p>Do other staff members need to self-isolate if a staff member tests positive?</p>	<p>No, other staff members outside of those identified through the risk assessment do not need to self-isolate if a teacher or other staff member contracts COVID19.</p> <p>The reason for this is because staff members should be able to implement social distancing when at work. It is appreciated that this will not always be possible with children in the classroom and so the DfE will advise on this.</p>

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<p>Who do we need to inform of a positive case?</p>	<p>As soon as a pupil or member of staff has tested positive for COVID-19, we recommend you contact the Essex Contact Tracing team for advice and to identify close contacts:</p> <p>0300 303 2698 provide.escontacttracing@nhs.net Mon-Fri: 8am to 8pm Sat/Sun/BH: 10am to 4pm</p> <p>You can, however, use the DfE advice line if you prefer or if the ECTT does not respond in a timely way: 0800 046 8687, open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.</p> <p>Please also notify schoolscommunication@essex.gov.uk as we are holding a central log of confirmed cases.</p>
<p>Should a school/college close to deep clean?</p>	<p>It is not necessary to close the whole site to deep clean as a result of a case of COVID19. It is advised that, if possible, children/staff are moved away from the area in which the symptomatic individual has been in order to clean.</p>
<p>If a group of people are asked to isolate but individuals within that group return a negative test, can they return to school/college?</p>	<p>Those identified through contact tracing must self-isolate for 14 days. This is because it may take a number of days for symptoms to show, in the meantime the individual could return a negative test but then go on to become positive.</p>
<p>Should we inform parents of a case of COVID19 in school/college.</p>	<p>Yes, it is advisable to inform the school/college community when there is a positive case. Transparency at this time is important as it allows parents, children and staff to be even more vigilant.</p> <p>Schools/colleges must not share the names or details of people with coronavirus (COVID-19) unless essential to protect others.</p>

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