



# Coronavirus Risk Assessment

2023 - 2024

**Approved by:** Governing Body

**Last reviewed on:** September 2023

**Next review due by:** September 2024

## Introduction

This risk assessment reflects the *People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19* advice published by the Government which was last updated on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2022. This risk assessment and outbreak management plan was updated on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.

The previous DfE guidance regarding COVID-19 in schools has now been withdrawn and the above advice is the default advice. This risk assessment and outbreak management plan reflects the above advice.

As we learn to live safely with COVID-19, there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and passing it on to others. These actions will also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections. COVID-19 and other respiratory infections such as flu can spread easily and cause serious illness in some people.

Vaccinations are very effective at preventing serious illness from COVID-19 however even if you are vaccinated there is a chance you might catch COVID-19 or another respiratory infection and pass it on to other people.

**The risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 and other respiratory infections is very low for most children and young people.**

**However, if any person has any concerns for any pupil regarding COVID-19, then this should be raised immediately with the Head Teacher or Senior Member of staff in order that appropriate safety measures can be taken.**

## Symptoms

The symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections are very similar. It is not possible to tell if you have COVID-19, flu or other respiratory infection based on symptoms alone. Most people with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections will have a relatively mild illness, especially if they have been vaccinated.

Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- Continuous cough
- High temperature, fever or chills
- Loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- Unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- Muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- Not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- Headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual

- Diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

You can find information about these symptoms on the NHS website.

The advice for children and adults differs as follows;

### **Advice for Children**

Respiratory infections are common in children and young people, particularly during the winter months. Symptoms can be caused by several respiratory infections including the common cold and COVID-19.

Very few children and young people with respiratory infections will become seriously unwell. This is also true for children and young people with long-term conditions.

For most children and young people, these respiratory infections will not be serious, and they will soon recover following rest and plenty of fluids.

#### **Attending education is hugely important for children and young people's health and their future.**

Children and young people with **mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or slight cough, who are otherwise well,** can continue to attend school.

Children and young people who are **unwell and have a high temperature** should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.

#### **It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed by a health professional.**

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to **stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the took the test.** After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing infection is much lower and they can return to school.

Where a pupil is unable to attend school setting due to COVID-19, we will continue to offer them access to high quality remote education. We will keep in contact with them and regularly check if they are accessing remote education.

Children and young people who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend school as normal.

## **Advice for Adults and people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19**

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, **and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry our normal activities**, you are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

You may return to work if you no longer feel unwell or no longer have a high temperature.

**If you have had a positive COVID-19 test result** you should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Most people will no longer be infectious after 5 days and you should maintain your isolation for 5 days after your test result. Some people remain infectious up to 10 days so if you return to school you should avoid contact with people at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 for 10 days after your positive test result.

## **Risk assessment**

Schools must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. We are required to regularly review and update our risk assessments, treating them as 'living documents' according to the circumstances at our school and the prevailing public health advice. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor whether the controls are effective and working as planned.

All employers are required to take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 in the workplace and should be able to explain what measures they have put in place to keep their employees safe at work.

Whilst individual risk assessments are not required, employers are expected to discuss any concerns that people have previously or subsequently raise.

## **Staff Daily Routine**

Staff follow the prevailing NHS and government advice on COVID-19.

Staff will continue to engage in, and promote, good hygiene, regular sanitising and working in well ventilated areas.

## **Cleaning**

The school will be clean at the start of the day and all staff are encouraged to ensure their working space is wiped down regularly.

## **Hand hygiene**

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that pupils and students clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

You should also continue to consider:

- how often pupils, students and staff will need to wash their hands
- whether staff working with pupils and students who spit uncontrollably want more opportunities to wash their hands than other staff
- whether pupils and students who use saliva as a sensory stimulant or who struggle with 'catch it, bin it, kill it' need more opportunities to wash their hands
- how to help pupils and students with complex needs to clean their hands properly.

## **Respiratory hygiene**

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important. As with hand cleaning, you should ensure that younger pupils and those with complex needs are helped to get this right.

## **PPE**

Face coverings are no longer advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

Should any person wish to wear a face covering then this should be allowed.

Most staff in school will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. If a pupil already has routine care needs that involve the use of PPE, the same PPE should continue to be used.

reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, to support them to access education successfully. Where appropriate, we will discuss with pupils and parents the types of reasonable adjustments that are being considered to support an individual.

## **Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated**

We will ensure the schools are well ventilated and a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary,

external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

We will balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature. The website [CIBSE COVID-19](#) advice provides more information.

CO2 monitors are located in our schools and staff can quickly identify where ventilation needs to be improved.

## **Pupil Daily Routine**

On arrival at school pupils are systematically escorted into school. Whilst maintaining social distancing as far as possible they will be offered hand sanitiser and asked to make their way to their classroom.

Pupils should wash their hands regularly, especially if they sneeze, cough and especially at the end of school prior to going home. Staff are also encouraged to wash their hands regularly. Pupils will be managed carefully when leaving the school. Pupils must be supervised when they are exiting the building by the tutor allocated for them that day.

## **Protection measures and outbreak management plans**

The DfE no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children and young people in consistent groups ('bubbles'). This means that bubbles are not needed.

However, we are mindful of contingency planning in the event of an outbreak and our outbreak management plan would result in the possibility that it becomes necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period to reduce mixing between groups. Additionally, we may limit assemblies and make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education.

## **Our approach to Risk**

We will put in place the following control measures and follow the guidance from the DfE.

Control Measures in place:

- ensure good hygiene for everyone
- maintain appropriate cleaning regimes
- keep occupied spaces well ventilated

- follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

Some pupils with SEND will need specific help and preparation for the changes to routine that these measures will involve. Staff should plan to meet these needs, for example using social stories.

To make sure pupils with medical conditions are fully supported, we will work with:

- local authorities
- health professionals
- regional schools' commissioners
- other services

Use individual healthcare plans to help pupils and students receive an education in line with their peers. In some cases, the pupil's and student's medical needs will mean this is not possible, and educational support will require flexibility.

Further information is available in the guidance on [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#).