

Frequently Asked Questions – Education and Public Health

Sept 2020

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1. Symptoms and Testing

Should sickness and diarrhoea be added to the main symptoms of COVID-19 as this has been mentioned in the news for children. If so should they get tested?	No, these are not symptoms which would on their own meet the criteria for someone to be tested. These remain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a high temperature • a new, continuous cough • a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
If parents keep their child at home because they have symptoms, should the sibling with no symptoms be kept off too?	The whole household should isolate while a test is being sought. This includes siblings from this/other schools/settings.
Is there any advice for children who are presenting with colds but also have a cough or temperature? Should these children stay at home?	Any child with one of the COVID symptoms (cough, temperature, loss/change in sense of taste or smell) should be tested. Even if there is a chance it is a cold. These individuals should isolate until a test is sought.
Children with asthma as we approach winter - how do we manage this with coughs which can be persistent and ongoing?	Any child with one of the COVID symptoms (cough, temperature, loss/change in sense of taste or smell) should be tested. Even if there is a chance it is related to allergies or asthma.

<p>How does this work for these children who often get a temperature at the same time due to coughing and extra effort on breathing</p>	<p>It is not usual for children with asthma to display signs of a temperature without being otherwise unwell.</p> <p>These individuals should isolate until a test is sought.</p>
<p>Can a child who has been taken to A&E with a severe cough be allowed to attend a setting if the hospital have not carried out a COVID test and discharged child saying it is an Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (croup)? Should the family self-isolate and arrange for a COVID test to be done?</p>	<p>Current guidance states: If anyone in your setting develops a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and be advised to follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection. This sets out that they must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-isolate for at least 10 days • arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) <p>If the hospital have not identified potential risk as being COVID-19 and not undertaken a test, you need to follow guidance as above and your risk assessment. Risk assessments should be shared with parents so that they are aware of expectations. Please also refer to your sickness policy and procedure you would follow prior to COVID-19.</p>
<p>What is a temperature for a child? Is it 37.8?</p>	<p>You should look for signs of a temperature i.e. flushed, hot to the touch on chest/back. You do not need to 'hit' a specific number. You may find the following link to NHS Covid-19 symptoms helpful https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/</p>
<p>Can we have a comprehensive list of illnesses temperature, etc what can be in setting and what needs to be sent home?</p>	<p>All those who have COVID symptoms must self-isolate and seek a test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a high temperature – feeling hot to touch on chest or back (you do not need to measure temperature) • a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual) • a loss or change to sense of smell or taste – this means they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal <p>Their households must also self-isolate until they have received the test result. If positive they must remain at home for 14days (10 for infected individual).</p>
<p>If a member of staff/child has symptoms of COVID, does everyone need to be tested</p>	<p>Just the person with symptoms, there may be a need for people to self-isolate for 14 days if they have been in close contact with the person who has symptoms.</p>

<p>OR just the person with symptoms?</p>	<p>If anyone who is self-isolating subsequently shows symptoms they should then be tested, if this comes back positive then their household will need to self-isolate</p>
<p>If a result comes back NEGATIVE, can staff return to work/nursery?</p>	<p>If staff / children get a negative test result, this means they are at low risk of having coronavirus.</p> <p>Other members of their household can stop self-isolating. If they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus they can stop self-isolating and return to work / setting</p>
<p>Can we ask staff and parents to provide proof of a negative or positive test?</p>	<p>The DfE guidance states that settings should not request verification of a negative test before allowing children back, but we feel it is appropriate to ask if you are concerned.</p>
<p>Do we contact Public Health only with a positive test or if an individual has symptoms?</p>	<p>In the case of a positive test result, DfE's guidance for education and childcare settings sets out the process for managing confirmed positive cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) when the individual is known to have been in a setting, school, or college. The DfE recognise that there have been some difficulties getting through to the local public health protection teams for advice on action to take on a positive case in the setting. As a result, from 17 September, there will be a new dedicated advice service available to advise nurseries, schools and colleges who have been informed of a confirmed case(s) of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their setting (i.e. a pupil or staff member testing positive). The DfE are updating their guidance to reflect this change.</p> <p>This means that instead of calling your local health protection team when there is a confirmed case in your education setting, you will now be asked to call the DfE's helpline and you will then be directed to the dedicated NHS advice team for nurseries, schools and colleges with confirmed cases.</p> <p>This new service can be reached by calling DfE's existing helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting the option for reporting a positive case. The line will be open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm, and 10am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays.</p> <p>Please only select this option if you have a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) within your nursery, school or college.</p> <p>You will be put through to a team of advisors who will inform you what action is needed based on the latest public health advice, and work through a risk assessment to identify close contacts.</p>

	<p>This new process will free up capacity of the Public Health England’s local health protection teams to deal with more complex cases, for example special schools and universities, or outbreaks where there is more than one confirmed case. Advisors will be responsible for escalating these cases as necessary following a triaging of your circumstances during the call.</p> <p>Please note we expect to be able to issue local helpline contact details shortly</p>
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2. Bubble Management – for school aged children and / or children attending dual settings

Should we send home a bubble while waiting for test results?	<p>No, there is no need for the bubble to self-isolate unless the test result is received, positive and the bubble have been in close contact with the individual during the infectious period (2 days prior to symptoms being displayed).</p> <p>The Essex Test and Trace Service/ Public Health will advise should this occur.</p>
What is the incubation period? How many days back would you contact trace?	2 days prior to symptoms displaying.
If a child is in two bubbles in different settings would both bubbles need to isolate if the child tests positive?	<p>Yes – both bubbles that the individual is part of would need to self-isolate.</p> <p>Where a child is in wrap around care/ before and after school clubs and a school all settings should try and maintain the school bubble where possible, but if they cannot it is important that the group is consistent and forms their own bubble.</p>
Are room bubbles still an option? If so, is there a maximum number of children who should be in the bubble?	From 20 July, early years settings are no longer required to keep children in small, consistent groups within settings but can return to normal group sizes. Settings should still consider how they can minimise mixing within settings, for example where they use different rooms for different age groups, keeping those groups apart as much as possible.
If a bubble has a positive case, do siblings outside of the bubble, have to self-isolate?	<p>Siblings of the positive individual yes.</p> <p>Siblings of the children in the wider bubble, no - unless their own sibling then goes on to display symptoms themselves.</p>

<p>What should a setting do/not do whilst waiting for advice from Public Health?</p>	<p>Whilst waiting for test results, be vigilant but no need to act regarding self-isolation.</p> <p>If the case is positive and you are clear who needs to self-isolate in response, inform those individuals and others for transparency and awareness. Review risk assessment and ensure you're satisfied with your protective measures in place.</p>
<p>Can bubbles within a setting bubble mix ie at lunch time?</p>	<p>You should keep bubbles as small as you can and keep each bubble apart. If bubbles come together and mix they should be treated as one larger bubble.</p> <p>Should a positive case occur the whole setting bubble will likely be asked to isolate if children are all mixing i.e. at lunch time.</p> <p>To avoid this, you should try to plan to keep bubbles separate</p>
<p>If as a childminder my own child is sent home from school/setting to self-isolate, do I need to close?</p>	<p>If someone in your child's school/setting bubble has had a positive test, your child will be sent home to isolate as they may have had contact with the person who has tested positive. However, the other people your child lives with would not need to isolate at this point unless they develop symptoms. Therefore, if you are a childminder at this point you would not need to close. However, at the time of the incident 'Test & Trace' should activate and it is most likely that you would be contacted by the Local Health Protection team if they felt you needed to close.</p>

3. Early Years Environment & Resources

<p>Can children use outdoor large equipment?</p> <p>Can community park spaces be used for outdoor play?</p>	<p>If in the setting large equipment can be used, clean them regularly - if possible in between groups.</p> <p>Settings should maximise use of private outdoor space. Early years providers, including childminders, may take small groups of children to outdoor public spaces, for example parks, provided that a risk assessment demonstrates that they can stay 2 metres away from other people wherever possible. This should be restricted to small groups and should be done in line with wider government guidelines on the number of people who can meet in outdoor public places. Providers should not take larger groups of children to public outdoor spaces at one time.</p>
<p>How often should toilet facilities be cleaned?</p>	<p>This depends on the circumstances, but toilets will need to be cleaned regularly. Different groups being allocated their own toilet blocks could be considered but is not a requirement if the site does not allow for it.</p>

Can children bring in items from home?	It would be recommended for children not to currently bring in items from home. If children need to bring any items from home for emotional support then this should be risk assessed and discussed with parents prior to child attending.
What is the plan going forward when temperatures drop below minimal levels in the setting due to windows being open to ventilate the room?	You will need to take a pragmatic approach to weather conditions and ventilation. If it is not appropriate to have windows open then of course you must shut them, but adequate ventilation will reduce the risk of transmission.
Can we sing at in the setting?	It is ok but increases the risk of transmission so you would need to think about other measures in place such as smaller groups, more spacing and ventilation. You could review your practice and have singing opportunities outside. Please see section 3 of the updated guidance Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

4. Face Coverings/ Masks

If we need to have a parent come into the setting, can we insist on them wearing a mask?	Parents and carers should not be allowed into the setting unless this is essential, and children should be dropped off and collected at the door if possible. We cannot 'mandate' that parents wear masks. You can request it is done, notify parents and put up signage but we cannot enforce this with parents Please see section 3 of the updated guidance Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
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5. Social Distancing

Social distancing – 1m or 2m	The general guidance for everyone is that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2m is the recommended approach as this reduces the risk of transmission considerably.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1m+ is acceptable with other mitigations in place – ventilation, being outdoors, wearing a face covering, but 2m is still preferred. <p>However, early years children are not expected to social distance. Settings need to ensure that they have completed risk assessments. Having assessed their risk, settings should work through the ‘system of controls’ (see guidance for more details). Settings should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ensure that all staff understand the ‘system of controls’ and how they are applied in settings. Time should be taken for staff to review the actions in the ‘system of controls’ and ask questions •ensure that parents and carers are aware of the ‘system of controls’, how this impacts them and their responsibilities in supporting it <p>If settings follow the guidance on the ‘system of controls’ they will effectively reduce risks in their setting and create an inherently safer environment.</p>
<p>What about staff social distancing from children, or children from staff?</p>	<p>Staff should definitely socially distance from each other.</p> <p>Staff should socially distance from children outside of the bubble they are allocated to.</p> <p>Within the bubble, it is not expected that staff will be able to socially distance from early years children and this is why the Test and Trace scheme would suggest the whole bubble, including staff, need to self-isolate should there be a positive test.</p>

6. Staffing

<p>Should our staff member come to work if their child has come into contact with the virus?</p>	<p>Your staff member does not need to self-isolate as they are not a contact of the infected individual. Unless their own child goes on to display symptoms. This should be treated as a childcare issue.</p>
<p>If there is a local lockdown and settings are made to close/or they have a Covid case and they have to close whilst staff isolate – do they have to refund parents fees?</p>	<p>For a local lockdown there would be an expectation for settings to remain open for Key Workers and Vulnerable children. Settings should have a contingency plan in place for what fees are payable if children are not attending. This should be shared and agreed with parents asap in preparation.</p> <p>If the setting has to close due to lack of staff or advice from Public Health, FEEE funding will remain in place. Settings should have a contingency plan in place for what fees are payable if</p>

	<p>children are not attending. This should be shared and agreed with parents asap in preparation. This was an issue the Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) looked in during the lockdown period, and we would recommend that each setting should look at the terms and conditions in their own contracts and policies with regards to whether fees apply when the setting is closed in general or because of an emergency closure alongside the following report.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nursery-and-early-years-sector-covid-19-restrictions-and-consumer-law/nursery-and-early-years-sector-covid-19-restrictions-and-consumer-law-advice#issue-1-charging-high-or-full-fees-for-services-not-provided-during-lockdown</p>
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7. Visits to Early Years Settings and Events

<p>Should family visits be avoided and replaced with remote alternatives or can they be conducted safely?</p>	<p>Physical visits are not recommended during opening hours. However, they could be considered outside of opening hours, which will enable adults to social distance, and you should consider whether any other measures are necessary – masks etc.</p> <p>Please see section 3 of the updated guidance Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak</p>
<p>Should an Ofsted inspector wear PPE?</p>	<p>No but they should socially distance.</p>
<p>Following the strengthening of the '6 people rule' commencing Monday 14th Sept can Early Years providers run events with or for parents?</p>	<p>No, Stay and play sessions, such as where the purpose is for parent and carers to meet each other, should not take place at the setting</p> <p>Parents and carers should not be allowed into the setting unless there is a specific need.</p> <p>Children should be dropped off and collected at the door, if possible.</p> <p>.</p>

8. Remote Learning and Support

<p>If a child does not attend the setting as showing symptoms of COVID19 and awaiting a test, should we provide remote learning?</p>	<p>If the child is unwell they are deemed off sick and you wouldn't need to provide support with the home learning environment.</p> <p>If they are self-isolating either due to contact with confirmed case, travel or symptoms but well enough to play then you should provide support with the home learning environment remote learning.</p>
<p>If a child has still not returned to the setting due to parents lack of confidence but still on roll, should I be in contact with the family?</p>	<p>You should be in contact with the family to meet the EYFS statutory safeguarding duty. The home learning environment can be supported virtually where possible.</p>