



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Early Years and Schools FAQs

These FAQs have been compiled to help provide additional guidance to local early years settings and schools about coronavirus. They will be regularly reviewed and updated in line with national guidance.

It's important to note that Public Health England (PHE) are the lead and local public health advice is supplementary.

Locally we are asking early years settings and schools to **notify the local Public Health team** if you have any symptomatic or confirmed cases for staff or students by completing this short [survey](#). Only in a confirmed case would you need to also notify Public Health England (details below).

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Contact details and Notifications

Do early years settings and schools have to notify Public Health England of any situations?

If you have a *confirmed* case for staff or student - please inform Public Health England of your situation by email on LCRC@phe.gov.uk or by phone 0300 303 0450.

You do *not* need to notify Public Health England or suspected/symptomatic cases – only if there is a confirmed case.

However, locally we are also asking early years settings and schools to notify the local Public Health team if you have any symptomatic or confirmed cases staff or students by completing this short [survey](#). This is so we can provide supplementary health protection advice if needed.

Early Years

How many children can we have in our bubble?

Keeping group sizes to a maximum of 8 children, while adhering to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) ratios, is preferable so groups are as small as possible. Providers are expected to ensure that there are no more than 16 children in a group in early years settings.

Do we need to take children's temperatures?

Settings do not need to take children's temperatures every morning or throughout the day. Public Health England's guidance is that routine testing of an individual's temperature is not a reliable method for identifying coronavirus. There is no need for anything other than social distancing while in a setting, normal personal hygiene and washing of clothes following a day in a childcare setting.

However, some settings are choosing to do this as part of their risk assessments.

Can children share toys?

Settings are being asked to consider new approaches that will need to be taken to minimise the sharing of resources between groups, for example for painting, sticking, cutting and outdoor construction activities, which should be thoroughly cleaned before and after use by different groups. Malleable resources, such as play dough, should not be shared between groups and public health advice is that, as sand pits cannot be thoroughly cleaned between uses, they should not be used at this time.

Can children go outside to play?

Yes! Please plan how outdoor space, where available, can be used as much as possible. But do consider how all groups of children can be given equal opportunities for outdoor learning, while ensuring outdoor equipment and toys are appropriately cleaned between being used by different groups.

Can under 5s get tested?

Yes. If they develop symptoms, or are advised to by NHS Test and Trace, all children including the under 5's can get a [test](#). See "testing" section below for more information.

Face Masks and Face Coverings

Do staff or pupils need to wear a face mask or face covering?

No. But if travelling on public transport, they will need to wear a face covering from Monday 15th June. See [How to wear and make a face cloth](#).

Travelling to School

How should children travel to school? Is Public Transport safe?

Walk/cycle or scooter if possible or drive a private vehicle. If families and children do have to travel on Public Transport, they will need to wear a face covering from Monday 15th June. See [How to wear and make a face cloth](#).

Suspected cases

What happens if someone becomes unwell at an educational or childcare setting?

If anyone in an education or childcare setting becomes unwell with 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 advised to follow the [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection guidance](#).

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. 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.

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.

PPE should be worn by staff caring for the child 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).

If a member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves (and in which case, a test is available) or the child subsequently tests positive (see 'What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a setting?' below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning the affected area with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

If the child tests negative, then they can return to school.

If they test positive, then the school will need to follow the following guidance and also report the situation as an outbreak to PHE/LCRC and the local Public Health team. See “Confirmed cases” section.

If there is a suspected case in the setting or school (either staff or pupil) - does this mean that the setting or school should close for 14 days?

No. If a pupil or staff member has symptoms, they need to self-isolate immediately and get a test.

Confirmed cases

What happens if there is a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) in a setting?

If a child, young person or staff member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 7 days and arrange to have a test to see if they have COVID-19. They can do this by visiting [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) or by calling NHS 119 if they do not have internet access, to arrange a test. Their fellow household members should self-isolate for 14 days. All staff and students who are attending an education or childcare setting will have access to a test if they display symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), and are encouraged to get tested in this scenario.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests negative, they can return to their setting and the fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

Locally we are also asking early years settings and schools to notify the local Public Health team if you have any symptomatic or confirmed cases by completing this short [survey](#).

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England’s local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. 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. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

If there is a confirmed case in the setting or school (either staff or pupil) - does this mean that the setting or school should close for 14 days?

Not necessarily but it is likely that the affected class group/bubble will be sent home and told to self-isolate for 14 days. PHE will advise you if there is a confirmed case and whether to send the whole school/class group/bubble home. If a pupil or staff member informs the setting or school that they have tested positive for coronavirus, schools and settings need to contact PHE (do not wait for PHE to contact you).

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The

other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

Staff and Children rotation into bubbles

Can staff and children cross over into another bubble? For example, if a teacher is with a bubble on Monday and Tuesday, can they teach another bubble for the rest of the week?

It is not advisable, but we realise that in some cases this is unavoidable. The advice is to keep cohorts together where possible and:

- ensure that children and young people are in the same small groups at all times each day, and different groups are not mixed during the day, or on subsequent days
- ensure that the same teacher(s) and other staff are assigned to each group and, as far as possible, these stay the same during the day and on subsequent days, recognising for secondary and college settings there will be some subject specialist rotation of staff
- ensure that wherever possible children and young people use the same classroom or area of a setting throughout the day, with a thorough cleaning of the rooms at the end of the day.
Consider seating students at the same desk each day if they attend on consecutive days

Risk assessments and hand hygiene are also important. If staff or children rotation is essential, then hand washing, and a change of clothes is advisable.

A deep clean of any surfaces during the “change-over” period is advised especially of high traffic touchpoint e.g. lights, desks, taps etc

Testing and Test Results

How do pupils or staff get a test?

Testing is now available for all ages (including the under 5’s).

For children who report symptoms, please inform their parents that they should apply to have a coronavirus (COVID-19) test. These are available for all ages (including the under 5’s) and online via the [NHS portal](#) or by calling [119^{\[1\]}](#)

For staff who report symptoms, please inform the individual that they should apply to have a coronavirus (COVID-19) test. These are available online via the [GOV.UK essential workers portal](#).

^[1] 119 is the new Covid number for NHS Test and Trace. 111 is still the number for all other non-emergencies

What are the different types of tests for coronavirus?




There are two main types of test: have you got it (now) and have you had it previously

- The swab test swabs the throat and nose and can tell if you have it now
- The swab test is available to everyone if you develop symptoms

- The antibody test is a blood test and can tell if you have had it in the past.
- The antibody test is currently only accessible for NHS staff or care workers and some hospital patients and care home residents

See graphic below and guidance [here](#) that explains in more detail

What are the differences between Coronavirus (COVID-19) tests

Swab test Do I have it?	Antibody test Have I had it?	
	Laboratory test	Home test
<p>Swab sample from throat and nose</p> 	<p>Blood test taken by a medical professional</p> 	<p>'Finger-prick' test taken at home</p> 
<p>Anyone experiencing symptoms can ask for a test through the NHS website, and priority testing is available to essential workers</p>	<p>This test is being offered to NHS and social care staff, and to NHS hospital inpatients and care home residents based on their clinician's advice</p>	<p>These tests are currently not accurate enough and the Government is not offering them at present. We plan to offer this in the future once more accurate tests are available</p>

If someone in a bubble is showing symptoms of coronavirus but has not been tested, what should the procedure be? Should we advise others in the meantime or wait for a result?

Anyone with symptoms should be advised to immediately go home, self-isolate and ask for a test through the NHS portal or by calling 119. No action is needed for the bubble unless the individual tests positive.

If a child or adult has a positive test for COVID-19, do the others in the bubble need to be informed and self-isolate?

Where the child, young person or staff member tests positive, the rest of their class or group within their childcare or education setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days. The other household members of that wider class or group do not need to self-isolate unless the child, young person or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. 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. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

If a pupil in the bubble has had a confirmed test result, do the other children in the bubble (who are self-isolating) need to get a test even if they don't have symptoms?

No. Only *if* they develop symptoms whilst they are self-isolating.

Where is the nearest test centre to our school in the event that anyone at school develops symptoms?

To find and book to attend the nearest testing site or to request a home test, visit the online [NHS portal](#) or call 119.

How can people without cars get tested?

Persons will require to drive or be driven to a test site. Public Health do not recommend that persons attend a testing site by public transport. Many people will find the most accessible option will be to elect to take a home test.

A parent has called to say a pupil has a high temperature and they are keeping them off school. They don't have a thermometer, but they felt hot – can they still get a test?

Yes. You do not need to have taken your temperature to get a test, if you feel hot or feverish you should get a test.

A pupil has been sent home with symptoms and advised to get a test- do we need to inform all families of those children who were in the child's bubble to self-isolate or do we wait for more information?

No action is needed for the bubble unless the individual tests positive and at which point you will receive advice on how to do this by PHE.

What is the NHS Test and Trace programme?

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>

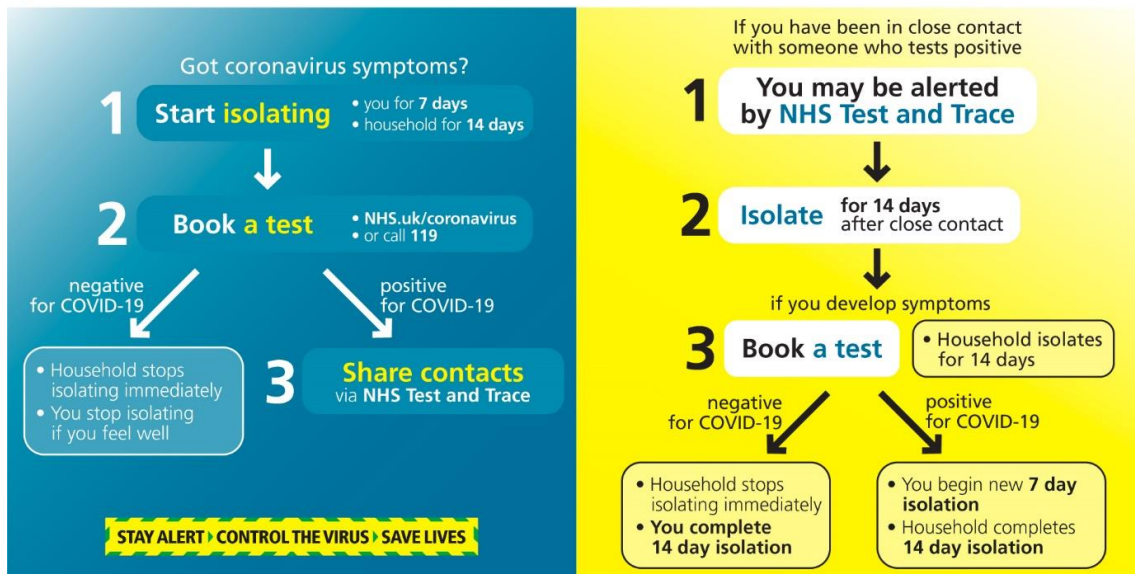
NHS Test and Trace aims to control the coronavirus rate of reproduction 'R' and reduce the spread of infection.

The NHS test and trace service:

- ensures that anyone who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can quickly be tested to find out if they have the virus
- helps trace close recent contacts of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus and, if necessary, notifies them that they must self-isolate at home to help stop the spread of the virus

We all have a role to play in helping to make the Test and Trace service work.

The diagram below outlines the steps we must all take if we have coronavirus symptoms or are contacted by NHS Test and Trace that we have been in close contact with someone with coronavirus.



A family with symptoms are worried about getting the test – can you explain what it involves?

The test is a simple swab test of the tongue and throat and can be done at home or at a testing site.

This is the NHS Test and Trace explainer video describes the test and trace service and has a graphic of a swab going up the nose.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0wHn1a3mwE>

The test involves taking a swab of the inside of the nose and the back of the throat, using a long cotton bud. You can do the swab yourself (if you are aged 12 or over) or someone can do it for you. Children aged 11 or under cannot do the swab themselves. Their parent or guardian will have to swab test them.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-antibody-tests>

Families are concerned about giving their data to the NHS Test and Trace. Can you advise on the data protection/safe guarantees for families who may interact with NHS Test and Trace and may have uncertain immigration status and/or have not adhered to social distancing?

The NHS Test and Trace will only share information on cases and contacts for the purposes of contact tracing and the COVID response and would not share the information for other purposes.

If a family refuses to get a pupil with symptoms tested – can the school re-admit the pupil after 7 days since onset of symptoms?

Yes, as long as they are well enough to return. But please do reiterate that the NHS Test and Trace programme is designed to be an effective and safe testing method that helps pupils get back to school quicker (if they test negative, they can return to nursery/school immediately).

Can children of all ages get a test?

Yes, everyone can get a test if they develop symptoms – including the under 5's

Symptoms

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **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

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>

What is a high temperature?

A high temperature means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature). If someone has a high temperature, they will need to self-isolate and get a test.

If the child is under 3 months and has a temperature over 38, please call NHS 111.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>

Shielding

What is 'shielding'?

'Shielding' is defined by Public Health England (PHE) as a measure to protect extremely clinically vulnerable people by minimising interactions with others. Those adults and children who are classed as extremely vulnerable or most at risk are strongly recommended to take additional precautions to avoid COVID-19 infection. Within their homes, individuals should minimise all non-essential contact with other members of their household.

PHE has [guidance on what measures need to be followed when 'shielding'](#).

What should we advise students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) who live with someone/others who are shielding? Should the student attend school?

For the vast majority of children and young people, coronavirus (COVID-19) is a mild illness. Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who have been [classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions](#) have been advised to shield. We do not expect these children to be attending school or college, and they should continue to be supported at home as much as possible. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). A small minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

What should we advise students who live with someone/others who are shielding? Should the student attend school?

If a child, young person or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting.

If a child, young person or staff member lives in a household with someone who is extremely clinically vulnerable, as set out in the [COVID-19: guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable guidance](#), it is advised they only attend an education or childcare setting if stringent social distancing can be adhered to and, in the case of children, they are able to understand and follow those instructions. This may not be possible for very young children and older children without the capacity to adhere to the instructions on social distancing. If stringent social distancing cannot be adhered to, we do not expect those individuals to attend. They should be supported to learn or work at home.

We are a special school where a parent/carer is unclear whether their child should be shielding but they have not received a shielding letter. What should the advice be to that parent/carer and pupil?

Children and young people (0 to 18 years of age) who have been [classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to pre-existing medical conditions](#) have been advised to shield. We do not expect these children to be attending school or college, and they should continue to be supported at home as much as possible. Clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable) people are those considered to be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19). A small minority of children will fall into this category, and parents should follow medical advice if their child is in this category.

We have a pupil who has a pre-existing medical condition, but are not sure if they are meant to be shielded

For a list of pre-existing medical conditions in terms of shielding, please see [here](#)

Infection control

Do early years settings and schools have to undertake any additional cleaning?

In all education, childcare and social care settings, preventing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) involves dealing with direct transmission (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces). A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this. These include:

- **minimising contact with individuals who are unwell** by ensuring that those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend childcare settings, schools or colleges
- **cleaning hands more often than usual** - wash hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with running water and soap and dry them thoroughly or use alcohol hand rub or sanitiser ensuring that all parts of the hands are covered
- **ensuring good respiratory hygiene** by promoting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach
- **cleaning frequently touched surfaces** often using standard products, such as detergents and bleach
- **minimising contact and mixing** by altering, as much as possible, the environment (such as classroom layout) and timetables (such as staggered break times)

More information can be found [here](#)

Returning from foreign travel and self-isolating

A member of the household is returning from foreign travel and so will be quarantining in the home of 2 pupils. Should the children be in school or should they be staying at home.

Yes, the children can attend school, unless any member of the household develops symptoms.

See advice here on [how to self-isolate following foreign travel](#):

The people you're staying with **do not need to self-isolate**, unless they travelled with you or you [develop the symptoms of coronavirus](#).

Outdoor play

We have no outdoor space. Will we be allowed to take groups of 15 pupils in their bubbles, to the park to play, or do we need to continue to maintain groups of 6?

Even though the current guidance for parks is 6 people maximum from different households, the group could reasonably be considered the equivalent to a single household for these purposes, as they mix together daily in class and remain only within their bubble, and thus could visit the park together. However, they would not be able to use equipment shared with other groups, such as playground equipment, climbing frames etc. Please do continue to practice safe social distancing and reinforce handwashing regularly, especially after returning from the park.

Resources to support concerns about coronavirus

Families are concerned about the children catching COVID-19 – is there any advice on what we can say to help reduce their fears?

It is important to remember that for most people who do catch it - and especially children - the virus will be mild. See a list of recommended resources below.

We want to talk to our pupils about coronavirus – can you recommend any resources?

- PHE has published [guidance](#) for parents and carers of children and young people on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the coronavirus. PHE has also published an [easy-read version](#) of information about coronavirus for people with learning disabilities.
- **Rise Above** (targeted at **young people age 10-16** aiming to improve resilience and mental health) including [tips for feeling good in lockdown](#).
- [Children's Commissioner](#) - Children's Guide to Coronavirus
- [Young Minds](#) - Tips, advice and guidance on where young people can get mental health support during tCOVID-19
- [Anna Freud](#) - Download pdfs of the advice for [young people](#), [parents and carers](#), [families](#) and for [professionals working with children and young people](#).

- [Ebug](#) - a free educational resource for classroom and home use from Public Health England which makes learning about micro-organisms, the spread, prevention and treatment of infection fun and accessible for all teachers and students.
- A [digital book](#) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Shaeffer, who wrote the Gruffalo, explaining Coronavirus for children. Based on advice from medical professionals, head teachers and a child psychologist. The book answers key questions in simple language appropriate for 5 to 9-year olds.

Key Guidance

Planning guide for early years and childcare settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-early-years-and-childcare-settings-from-1-june/planning-guide-for-early-years-and-childcare-settings>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for schools and other educational settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>