

# Guidance for Parents and Carers for the Return to School

## January 2022

### Introduction

The government has published its latest guidance for schools on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2022, which includes updates and reminders on testing, self-isolation, information on remote education, the wearing of face coverings as well as other information to ensure that face to face education is delivered as safely as possible.

There are no major changes to the previous guidance, therefore any additional measures that may be brought in are in line with the school's outbreak management plan and recommendations from the local authority and the local health protection team.

This guidance takes extracts directly from the government guidance that was sent today.

#### **1. Testing**

As with previous guidance, only secondary pupils have been asked to undertake mandatory testing on return to school. **However, as local cases surge, it is strongly advised that your child takes a lateral flow test on the evening before or morning of, their return to school.** This will enable us to provide reassurance to other parents, our staff and the community and limit any potential spread of infection that may result in further staff and pupil absence.

If your child does return a positive result, they must be booked for a PCR test to confirm this, and school must be notified so that we can report to the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

#### **2. Information on the changes to the self-isolation period for individuals who test positive for Covid 19.**

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education setting from day 7.

**Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.** Further information is available in the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

#### **3. Daily testing for close contacts of COVID-19**

People who are fully vaccinated, or children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months, identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19, should take an LFD test every day for seven days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time.

Children under 5 are not being advised to take part in daily testing of close contacts. **Instead, they should take a PCR test.** If a child under 5 is a contact of a confirmed case, they are not required to self-isolate and should not start daily

testing. If they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 they should limit their contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 **and arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible**. They can continue to attend an education or childcare setting while waiting for the PCR result. If the test is positive, they should follow the [stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed COVID-19 infection](#).

#### **4. A reminder that the current requirements on remote education continue to remain in place**

As students and pupils return to education and childcare settings following the holiday period, the current requirements for remote education continue to remain in place.

We recognise that the high rates of COVID-19 may cause difficulties with the availability of staff. The government's shared priority is to keep education settings open and children and young people continuing face-to-face education. Where staffing issues arise, we will move to our outbreak management plan and may use our teaching, temporary and support staff more flexibly where required to ensure that we remain open. As pupils do not need to be kept in consistent groups, the government has permitted schools to combine classes. Please note, for us, this will be if all other options have been exhausted.

Where there is a need for remote education, we will utilise online learning through platforms such as Seesaw. School will endeavour to support families who may need support accessing online learning and have a limited number of devices that may be loaned.

#### **5. Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice on COVID-19 vaccination for at-risk 5 to 11 year olds**

On Wednesday 22 December, the government accepted advice from the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\)](#) that a primary course of vaccination should be offered to children aged 5 to 11 years old who are in a clinical risk group, or who are a household contact of someone (of any age) who is immunosuppressed. The NHS is working through updated guidance and will set out how this is going to be operationalised shortly. **Please note, this is not for schools to organise or deliver.**

#### **6. Updated guidance on the use of face coverings in education settings**

From Sunday 2 January, it is recommended that face coverings are worn in classrooms where pupils in year 7 and above are educated. The advice builds on the existing proportionate guidance that recommends face coverings for all adults in communal areas of all settings.

**All adults and visitors to schools will be asked to wear a face covering. Staff will also wear a face covering at school gates to protect you, and we ask politely that you do the same to protect our staff and other parents.**

**For further information or access to the guidance, please click on the links below.**

**Thank you for your support in keeping our team, school and community safe and well.**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_source=f634ce23-b2c3-4477-95f7-88b2519de1ea&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=f634ce23-b2c3-4477-95f7-88b2519de1ea&utm_content=daily)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1044530/Schools\\_guidance\\_Jan\\_22.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1044530/Schools_guidance_Jan_22.pdf)