

Government guidance

You may have questions about the Government's approach to reopening schools. I have summarised some of the [Government's latest advice](#) (updated 21st August) which I hope will address some your questions. You can read the Government's full advice by searching 'DfE parents guidance.'

Is it safe to return?

All children, in all year groups, will return to school full time from the beginning of the autumn term. The prevalence of coronavirus has decreased since schools restricted their opening to most pupils, the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running and we understand more about the measures that need to be in place to create safer environments in schools.

The scientific evidence shows that coronavirus (COVID-19) presents a much lower risk to children than adults of becoming severely ill, and there is no evidence that children transmit the disease any more than adults. There will still be risks while coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in the community, and that is why schools will be asked to put in place a range of protective measures

Attendance

It is vital that children and young people return to school, for their educational progress, for their wellbeing, and for their wider development. School attendance will be mandatory from the beginning of the new academic year. This means that it is your legal duty as a parent to send your child (if they are of compulsory school age) to school regularly.

If you have concerns about your child returning to school because you consider they may have other risk factors, you should discuss these with your school. They should be able to explain ways they are changing things to reduce risks.

Actions you can take

Do not send your child to their nursery or school if:

- they are showing [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- someone in their household is showing symptoms

[Arrange a test](#) if you or your child develops symptoms. Inform your nursery or school of the results.

If the test is positive, follow [guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#), and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process.

It is really important that you help nurseries and schools to implement these actions by following the advice set out here and wider public health advice and guidance.

Actions that schools will take

We have asked schools to:

- manage confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school, in line with current public health guidance - this means your child may be asked to self-isolate for 14 days by their school (based on advice from their local health protection teams) if they have been in close, face to face contact with someone who has tested positive for the virus
- ensure that everyone cleans their hands more often than usual, including when they arrive, when they return from breaks, and before and after eating - this should be done for 20 seconds with soap and running water or hand sanitiser
- promote the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach, to ensure good respiratory hygiene
- enhance cleaning, including cleaning frequently touched surfaces more often

Nurseries will also minimise contact between individuals where they can. This could mean using different rooms for different age groups and keeping those groups apart. Schools will minimise contact and encourage maintaining distance as far as possible. They will decide how best to do this because it will be different for each school. This will involve asking children and young people to:

- stay within specified separate groups (or bubbles)
- maintain distance between individuals

Younger children may not be able to maintain social distancing. It is likely that for younger children the emphasis will be on separating groups.

Local outbreaks

Nurseries or schools will contact their local health protection team if they:

- have 2 or more confirmed cases of coronavirus among pupils or staff within 14 days
- see an increase in children or staff absence rates due to suspected or confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19)

The local health protection team will advise what action is required. Usually, closure will not be necessary, but some groups may need to self-isolate. If an outbreak in a school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched. They will test everyone who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will first focus on the person's class, followed by their year group, then the whole school if necessary.

If your local area sees a spike in infection rates that results in localised community spread, the government will decide what actions need to be taken. Your child's school should provide remote education if:

- groups of pupils need to self-isolate
- a larger restriction of attendance at school is needed

Face Coverings

Nationwide, the Government is not recommending face coverings are necessary in education settings because a system of control, applicable to all education environments, provides additional mitigating measures. Schools have the discretion to require face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be safely managed, if they believe that it is right in their circumstances.

More information on [Face Masks is available here](#) or by searching 'face coverings in education.'

Curriculum

The Government has set out what they expect schools to teach when pupils return. Schools will provide an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. There may need to be changes to some subjects, such as PE and music, so that schools can teach these subjects as safely as possible.

Extra-curricular activities

The Government advises that schools will be permitted to run breakfast and after-school activities. Breakfast club will commence from Monday 07 September, please note you must complete the booking form before your child can attend. In regards to after-school activities, we will be monitoring the return and look at the possibility of starting in term 2. They must be delivered in line with the guidance on protective measures, so things may need to run differently.

Suspected symptoms of coronavirus amongst the school community

The Academy will fully engage with the NHS Test and Trace process and contact our local Public Health England health protection team. Parents/carers need to be ready to:

- book a test if you or your child are displaying symptoms. Pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop.
- provide details of anyone you have been in close contact with if you or your child test positive for coronavirus or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- self-isolate if you have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus

Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS testing and tracing website. Parents must inform us immediately of the results:

- if you or your child tests negative, and if you or your child feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), you can stop self-isolating.
- if you or your child tests positive, you should follow the 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus infection' and must continue to self-isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms and your child may only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough.

Confirmed case of coronavirus amongst the school community

The Academy will take swift action if we become aware that someone who has attended has tested positive for coronavirus. We will contact the local health protection team that will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who has been in close contact with the person during the period that they were infectious, and ensure they are asked to self-isolate. Based on the advice from the health protection team, we would then send home those pupils who have been in close contact with the person who has tested positive, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they were last in close contact with that person when they were infectious. Close contact means:

- direct close contacts - face to face contact with an infected individual 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) with an infected individual

The health protection team will provide definitive advice on who must be sent home, and we will keep a record of pupils and staff in each bubble to help in this instance.

Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless your child who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms. If someone in a bubble that has been asked to self-isolate develops symptoms themselves within their 14-day isolation period they should follow 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus infection'. They should get a test, and:

- if the test delivers a negative result, they must remain in isolation for the remainder of the 14-day isolation period.
- if the test result is positive, they should inform us immediately, and must isolate for at least 7 days from the onset of their symptoms. Their household should self-isolate for at least 14 days from when the symptomatic person first symptoms had, following 'stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus infection'



If we have more than one confirmed case

If the Academy was to experience an outbreak (2 or more confirmed cases of coronavirus among pupils or staff within 14 days, or if there is an increase in absence due to suspected cases of coronavirus), we will contact our local health protection team. This team will advise any additional action, though the closure of the whole school will generally not be necessary.

Where an outbreak in a school is confirmed, a mobile testing unit may be dispatched to test others who may have been in contact with the person who has tested positive. Testing will focus on the person's class, their year group, the whole school, if necessary. If our local area sees a spike in infection rates, we may be advised to implement further measures.



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