

Procedure for Managing Covid-19 Cases in Educational Settings in Solihull

In line with the government's updated [Living with COVID-19 Plan](#) the following procedure is advised to be followed in the event of cases of COVID-19/respiratory infections within a school/setting. Outbreak management advice can be found at on the [Solihull Council website](#)

COVID-19/respiratory infection outbreak advice can be sought from Solihull Council Public Health at healthprotection@solihull.gov.uk (please note the new email address) in **exceptional circumstances only for mainstream schools and any outbreaks with 5+ linked cases in special schools or alternative provision.**

START HERE:

Pupil/staff member develops [symptoms](#) of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, a high temperature and/or feels unwell

Actions for the individual: They are advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people (for 5 days for adults and 3 days for those under 18) until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature. Upon return, they should have been **48 hours fever-free and feeling well.**

Settings/families should be aware of the list of respiratory symptoms for [children](#) and [adults](#) (links).

Actions for the setting: See [Solihull Council website](#) for outbreak management advice.

or START HERE:

Pupil/staff member receives a positive Covid-19 test result

Actions for the individual: They are advised to try to **stay at home** and avoid contact with other people for **5 days**, or **3 days if below 18 years** and only return when they have been **48 hours fever-free and feeling well.**

Actions for the setting: See [Solihull Council website](#) for outbreak management advice.

Reducing the spread:

[GermDefence](#) is a website that can help people identify simple ways to protect people from COVID-19 and other viruses. Symptomatic people can reduce the risk to other people by taking the following steps:

- avoid contact with anyone you know who is at [higher risk of becoming severely unwell](#) if they are infected with COVID-19, especially [those whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination](#)
- limit close contact with other people outside your household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces
- wear a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask if you do need to have close contact with other people, or you are in a crowded place
- wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitiser
- following the guidance at [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Returning to normal routine:

Pupils under 18: can go back to school, college or childcare after **3 days AND** when they have been **48 hours fever-free and feeling well.**

Staff can return to work after 5 days AND when they have been 48 hours and feeling well.

Important Considerations

1. Staff and pupils at a higher risk of serious illness from respiratory infections

For information on people at **higher risk** of becoming seriously unwell from a respiratory infection, including COVID-19 – [click here](#) Further information is also available in the guidance on [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#).

2. Infection Prevention

2.1 Vaccination

Vaccination is the single, most effective means we have for protecting people from Covid-19 and reducing transmission risk in educational settings. Schools/settings should continue to encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff whenever possible. For up to date vaccination information visit [NHS COVID-19 Vaccinations](#). You can find out more about the in-school vaccination programme in [COVID-19 vaccination programme for children and young people guidance for schools](#).

Evidence shows that the booster vaccination is extremely important in protecting against the Omicron variant of COVID-19 and there is currently plenty of vaccine capacity locally with further information available here - [Birmingham & Solihull NHS COVID-19 Vaccination Service](#).

2.2 Cleaning, hand hygiene and ventilation

All education and childcare settings should continue to ensure **good hygiene** for everyone, maintain appropriate **cleaning regimes**, keep occupied spaces **well ventilated**, and follow public health advice on testing and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

2.3 Pupil Groups and Mixing

It is no longer necessary to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). As well as enabling flexibility in curriculum delivery, this means that assemblies can resume, and you no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch. School/settings should ensure contingency (outbreak management) plans cover the possibility that in some local areas it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

2.4 Continue clear messaging to parents/carers on spotting symptoms

All settings should continue their **strong messaging about signs and symptoms** to keep symptomatic children at home reduce the likelihood of respiratory infection outbreaks in the school/setting.

Appendices A-E

Appendix A: Guidance for defining cases who have mixed closely

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting as follows:

In early years:

- a childminder minding children, including their own
- childminders working together on the same site
- a nursery class/group and their staff

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- a friendship group who often play together
- staff and children taking part in the same activity session together

For primary and secondary schools:

- a form group or subject class
- smaller intervention groups
- a friendship group sat together/mixing at lunch/break times
- a sports team
- a group in before after-school care or activity session
- pupils or staff who travel to and from school together (including walking groups, cycling groups and school transport)

For wraparound childcare or out-of-school settings:

- a private tutor or coach offering one-to-one tuition to a child, or to multiple children at the same time
- staff and children taking part in the same class or activity session together
- children who have slept in the same room or dormitory together

For further education colleges:

- students and teachers on practical courses that require close hands-on teaching, such as hairdressing and barbering
- students who have played on sports teams together
- students and teachers who have mixed in the same classroom/seminar/teaching space
- students who have mixed socially during break/ lunchtimes

Appendix B: Possible Covid-19 outbreak management actions

For updated reporting thresholds and additional measures, visit the [Solihull Council website](#).

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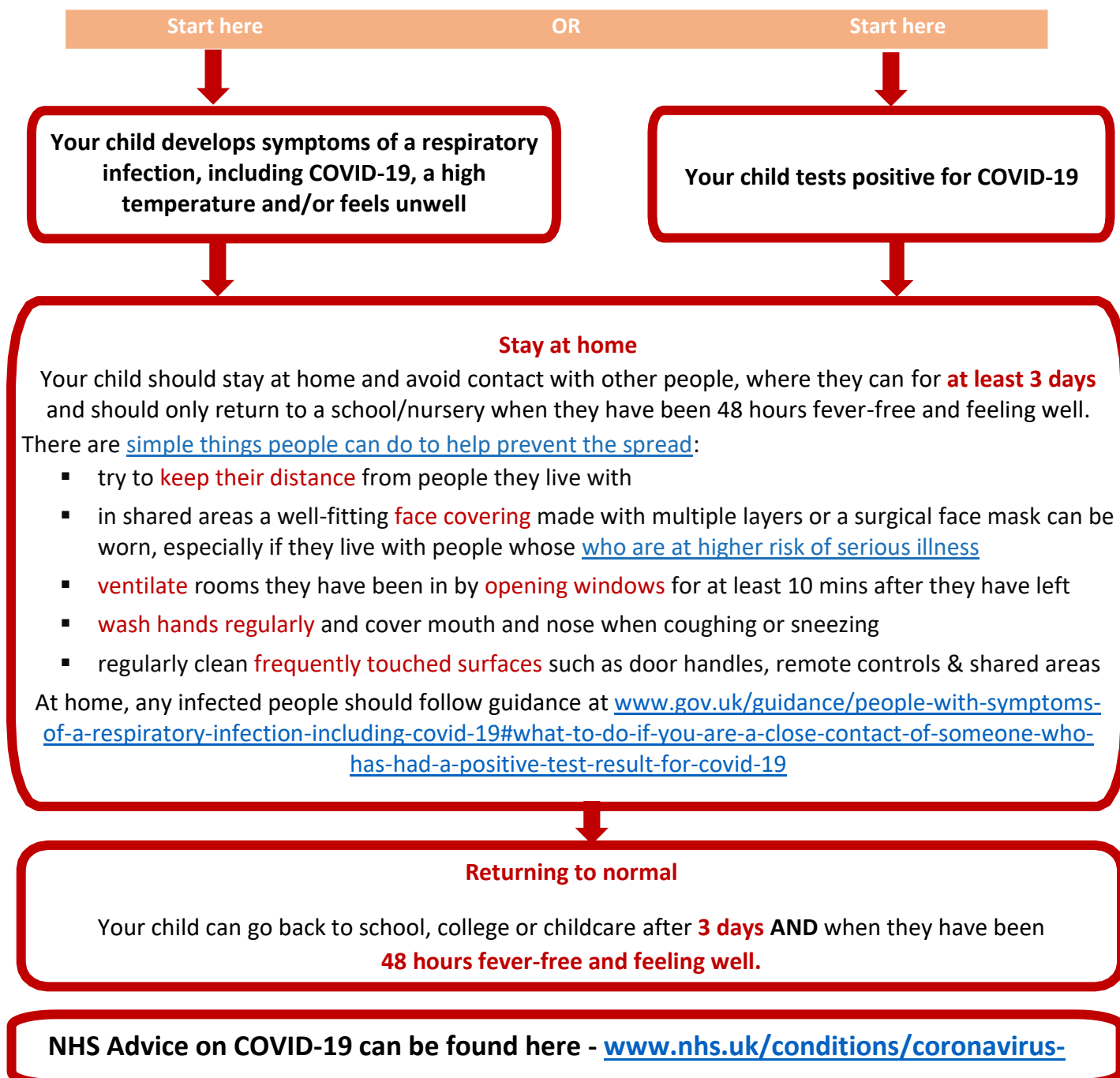
Appendix C: Covid-19/respiratory infection guide for parents/carers

COVID-19/respiratory infection guide for parents/carers

As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, we need to minimise the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct risks to children are very low and every adult has been offered the vaccine.

This document provides information for parents and carers of children under the age of 18 years and 6 months who have –

- Developed symptoms of COVID-19/a respiratory infection - a list of respiratory symptoms to be aware of in children under 18 can be found at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/
- Tested positive for COVID-19



Appendix D: Letter for educational settings to send to parents/carers

Date: _____

Dear Parents/Carers,

Over the last xxx weeks we have been made aware that several members of the school community have developed symptoms of a respiratory infection/ COVID-19, a high temperature and/or have felt unwell.

We are continuing to monitor the situation and where necessary are working with public health advisers. This letter is to inform you of the current situation and provide advice on how to support your child.

The school remains open and providing your child remains well they can continue to attend school as normal. There are a number of management actions that may be taken to reduce the spread of respiratory infections in schools/settings including increasing cleaning, ventilation and reducing mixing in schools. In exceptional circumstances, face coverings could be considered for use in communal areas by staff, visitors and secondary-age pupils. We are extremely mindful of the negative impact of missing education has on children and young people, therefore, restricting attendance at school will only be considered as an absolute last resort.

What to do if your child –

Develops symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19 and/or has a high temperature

They are advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 3 days AND they have been 48 hours fever-free and feel well enough to resume normal activities.

What to do if your child tests positive for COVID-19

If they tests positive for COVID-19, they should remain at home for at least 3 days AND they have been 48 hours fever-free and feel well enough to resume normal activities.

Household contacts

People who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 are at the highest risk of becoming infected because they are most likely to have prolonged close contact. If you live with, or have stayed overnight in the household of, someone who has COVID-19 please follow government guidance at www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19#what-to-do-if-you-are-a-close-contact-of-someone-who-has-had-a-positive-test-result-for-covid-19

How you can help

Vaccination is the single, most effective step we can take to protect ourselves and others from COVID-19 and we would urge everyone to 'grab a jab'. This is crucially important for lowering the infection rate in schools/settings and the wider community and is the best way you can protect yourself and your family from COVID-19. For more information visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/>

Symptoms - It is important that all parents/carers are vigilant in spotting symptoms in their child(ren) and as above, do not send them to their school/setting if they have the symptoms listed at www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/

Hand hygiene – respiratory infections are easily spread from person to person. Good hygiene by everyone in the family reduces the risk. This means washing hands with soap and warm water for a minimum of 20 seconds or using hand sanitiser regularly.

If you need any further advice –

- For non-immediate medical help phone NHS 111, or visit <https://111.nhs.uk/>
- For COVID-19 related questions or queries phone 119, or visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/using-the-nhs-and-other-health-services/when-to-call-119/>.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

[Ends]

Appendix E: Further information

Guidance for managing outbreaks of possible COVID-19/respiratory infections in educational & childcare settings at [Living with COVID in Solihull](#)

Guidance specific to education and childcare that settings should now refer to includes:

- [UK Health Security Agency \(UKHSA\) health protection in education and childcare settings](#)
- [DfE emergency planning and response](#)
- [DfE good estate management for schools](#)

New and updated UKHSA guidance for the general population, which will also be relevant to education and childcare settings, includes:

- [guidance for people with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19, or a positive test result for COVID-19](#)
- [living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#)
- [ventilation of indoor spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections](#)
- [COVID-19 guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk](#)

UKHSA Guidance on respiratory infections including Covid-19 - [Chapter 3: public health management of specific infectious diseases - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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The Spotty Book (infection prevention guidance) - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2021/08/spotty-book-2021.pdf>

Public Health
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