

Contact: Amanda Healy  
Direct Tel: 03000 264323  
email: amanda.healy@durham.gov.uk



28 September 2021

Dear Parents

### **Advice to all parents – advise and inform**

Dear Parents,

We are writing to confirm the new procedures for schools following the changes made to the operational guidance at the end of August. For full details of the guidance please see [www.gov.uk/backtoschool](http://www.gov.uk/backtoschool)

From the autumn term close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

Where we have been advised that there has been a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school NHS test and trace will be in contact with individuals who have been identified as a close contact to let them know if they are legally required to self-isolate, and to provide further advice.

The school will remain open and your child should continue to attend as normal if they remain well. There are things we can all do to stop coronavirus spreading and these are outlined below. Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.

### **How to stop coronavirus (COVID-19) spreading**

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with coronavirus (COVID-19):

- get vaccinated – everyone aged 16 and over can [book COVID-19 vaccination appointments](#) now
- wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day

### **Adult and Health Services**

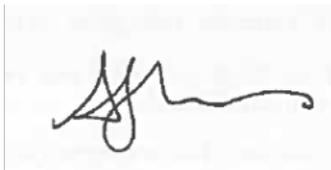
Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UG  
Main Telephone 03000 26 0000

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- meet people outside and avoid crowded areas
- open doors and windows to let in fresh air if meeting people inside
- wear a face covering when it's hard to stay away from other people – particularly indoors or in crowded places
- participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results>

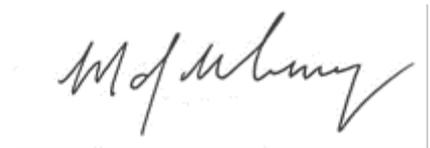
### **Further information**

Further information is available at [nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus)

Yours sincerely



**Amanda Healy**  
Director of Public Health



**Jim Murray**  
Head of Education & Skills

## **What to do if your child develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or tests positive for COVID-19**

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child does develop symptoms, they should get a PCR test and remain at home at least until the result is known. [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-a-free-pcr-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus-covid-19). If positive, the child should isolate until at least 10 days after their symptoms appeared.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111.

If your child has a positive test result but does not have symptoms they should stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the date the positive test was taken. This isolation period will be extended if they go on to develop symptoms by counting 10 full days from the day following their symptom onset

## **Instructions for people who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19**

From 16 August, [you will not be required to self-isolate if you are a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19](#) and any of the following apply:

- you are fully vaccinated (with an MHRA approved COVID-19 vaccine in the UK, and at least 14 days have passed since you received the vaccine.
- you are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

NHS Test and Trace will contact you to let you know that you have been identified as a contact and check whether you are legally required to self-isolate. Even if you do not have symptoms, [you will be advised to have a PCR test as soon as possible](#).

Even if you are vaccinated, you can still be infected with COVID-19 and pass it on to others. If you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 but you are not required to self-isolate, you can help protect others by

- limiting close contact with other people outside your household, especially in enclosed spaces
- wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces and where you are unable to maintain social distancing
- limiting contact with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable
- taking part in [regular LFD testing](#)

You should follow this advice while the person in your household with COVID-19 is self-isolating. Those who are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) should be supported to minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

You may be eligible for a Test and Trace Support Payment, for more information please see: [www.gov.uk/test-and-trace-support-payment](http://www.gov.uk/test-and-trace-support-payment)

### **Help, support, and further information.**

To help you comply with the requirement to self-isolate, the County Durham Together Community Hub can provide access to essential supplies, financial support and emotional support as well as other services. Please visit [durham.gov.uk/covid19help](http://durham.gov.uk/covid19help) or call the Community Hub on 03000 260260 for further details.

There is also support available the coronavirus section via [durhamlocate.org.uk](http://durhamlocate.org.uk)

### **Useful Websites**

[www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

[www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)

[www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus)

[www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help](http://www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help)

[www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk)