

Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Primary School



Managing Suspected and Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

A Guide for Parents

This document outlines our arrangements for managing suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19. It has been written in the form of questions and answers. Please note that, as COVID-19 is a rapidly evolving situation, our arrangements may change as national and local guidance evolves.

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Section 1 – COVID-19 Key Messages

What are the symptoms?

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A new continuous cough. This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if they usually have a cough, it may be more than usual).

and/or

- A high temperature. This means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure their temperature).
- A loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Children may also display gastrointestinal symptoms.

If your child or anyone in the household does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

What is the mode of transmission?

COVID-19 is passed from person to person mainly by large respiratory droplets and direct contact (close unprotected contact, usually less than one metre). These droplets can be directly inhaled by the person, or can land on surfaces which another person may touch which can lead to infection if they then touch their nose, mouth or eyes.

What is the incubation period?

The incubation period (i.e. time between exposure to the virus and developing symptoms) is between 1 and 14 days (median 5 days).

When is a person infectious?

A person is thought to be infectious 48 hours before symptoms appear, and up to ten days after they start displaying symptoms.

Are children at risk of infection?

Children of all ages can catch the infection but children make up a very small proportion of COVID-19 cases with about 1% of confirmed cases in England aged under 19 years. Children also have a much lower risk of developing symptoms or severe disease.

Can children pass on the infection?

There is some uncertainty about how much asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic children can transmit the disease but the evidence so far from a number of studies suggests children are less likely to pass it on and do not appear to play a major role in transmission. Most children with COVID-19 have caught the infection from adults and not the reverse. This is unlike flu.

Why is PPE not recommended for teachers and children?

Transmission of COVID-19 is usually through droplets; the mainstay of control measures are minimising contact and thorough hand and respiratory hygiene. When these measures are maintained, and symptomatic persons are excluded, the risk is minimal.

How can I help to stop COVID-19 spreading?

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

Do

- wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- wash your hands as soon as you get home
- 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

Further information is available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation is when you do not leave your home because you have or might have coronavirus (COVID-19). This helps stop the virus spreading to other people.

Self-isolation is different to:

- social distancing- general advice for everyone to avoid close contact with other people
- shielding – advice for people at high risk from coronavirus.

When should you self-isolate?

You must self-isolate immediately if:

- you have any symptoms of coronavirus (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste)
- you've tested positive for coronavirus – this means you have coronavirus
- you live with someone who has symptoms or tested positive
- someone in your support bubble has symptoms or tested positive
- you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace
- you arrive in the UK from a country with a high coronavirus risk – see GOV.UK: how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK

Further advice can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

What is a support bubble?

A support bubble is where someone who lives alone (or just with their children) can meet people from 1 other household. You can form a support bubble with another household of any size that is not part of a support bubble with anyone else if you:

- live by yourself – even if carers visit you to provide support
- are a single parent living with children who were under 18 on 12 June 2020

Once you're in a support bubble, you can think of yourself as being in a single household with people from the other household. It means you can have close contact with that household as if they were members of your own household. Once you make a support bubble, you should not change who is in your bubble. Further details are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-a-support-bubble-with-another-household>

Section 2 – Arrangements for Managing a Suspected Case

Anyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19, or whose household member (or support bubble) develops symptoms, should immediately self-isolate. They should not attend school.

What will happen if someone in a household has symptoms?

Parent should notify school of their child's/children's absence by phone (0121 744 6852) before 9:30am (Monday to Friday). In your message please tell school that your child/children are isolating because they, or someone in your household (or support bubble) have COVID-19 symptoms.

The expectation is for all household members to follow PHE Staying at Home Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection> Your household member (adult or child) with symptoms should isolate for 10 days starting from the first day of their symptoms. The rest of your household should isolate for 14 days from the day when your household member became symptomatic.

The household member (adult or child) who has symptoms should get tested via NHS UK (<https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test>) or by contacting NHS 119 via telephone if you do not have internet access. The current advice (on 17th September 2020) is that people who do not have symptoms should not request a test.

We will keep a record of all children isolating. Children will be recorded using a Y code on the school register, this is an authorised absence - parents will not be fined for not sending their child/children to school if they are isolating.

We will not notify Solihull Local Authority or the Health Protection Team. Schools are only required to notify when there is a positive case.

What will happen if a child falls ill while at school?

If a child becomes unwell with a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a loss of or change in their normal sense of taste or smell the child will be sent home as soon as possible.

While awaiting collection they will be moved to the meeting room at the front of school, this is our designated isolation room. We will ensure the room is well ventilated. They will be supervised by a member of the office staff. Staff will maintain a distance of 2 metres.

If they need to go to the toilet while waiting to be collected, they will use the visitor toilet at the front of school. The toilet will be cleaned and disinfected before it is used by anyone else. The isolation room will also be cleaned after the child has been collected.

PPE will be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained.

We will ask for any siblings to go home at the same time, even if they are not displaying symptoms.

School staff are not medical experts. If school staff believe your child has symptoms and may have COVID-19 we will always follow our school procedures. We would advise parents to seek medical advice. You can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

What information will be shared with parents?

If a class teacher is self-isolating we will, in agreement with the teacher, notify their class and their parents. We will confirm the date the teacher is expected to return to school. The letter will also confirm what arrangements are in place to ensure their children continue to receive a high quality education.

Will school send children (classmates) home because a pupil, or member of staff, has COVID-19 symptoms?

No, classmates and staff can attend school as normal. The child with COVID-19 symptoms should stay at home (see Stay-at-home-guidance) and will be advised to get tested. All members of their household (and support bubble) should also be self-isolating at home for 14 days, including any siblings. If all symptomatic household members test negative, the child/staff member can return to school. The household (and support bubble) can end isolation.

Should a child/staff member come to school if a member of their household has COVID-19 symptoms?

No. If a member of the child's household is unwell with COVID-19 symptoms then the child/staff member should isolate for 14 days starting from the day the household member(s) became ill. If the child subsequently develops symptoms then they should isolate for 10 days from the date they developed symptoms. See Stay-at-home-guidance. The household member(s) should be tested within 5 days of symptom onset. If all symptomatic household members test negative, the child/staff member can return to work.

If a child has COVID-19 symptoms, gets tested and tests negative, can they return to school even if they still have symptoms?

If the child is NOT a known contact of a confirmed case the child can return to school if the result is negative, provided they feel well and they have not had a fever for 48 hours.

If the child is a contact of a confirmed case they must stay off school for the 14 day isolation period, even if they test negative themselves. This is because they can develop the infection at any point up to day 14 (the incubation period for COVID-19), so if a child tests negative on day 3 they may still go on to develop the infection.

Section 3 – Arrangements for Managing a Confirmed Case

What should I do if my child's receives a positive test result?

It is essential you contact school if your child receives a positive test. During school hours please contact school on 0121 744 6852. During out of school hours please call 07825 055187. This number is only to report OLW pupils who test positive to COVID-19.

What will school ask for?

School will ask you to forward your NHS COVID-19 Notification, you normally receive this via text and/or email. We require this confirmation in order to 'trigger' our response arrangements. Once confirmed, we will delete the text or email.

Where a pupil has tested positive, school will be contacted by a 'contact tracer'. This may be a while after you receive notification.

When you notify school, we will need to establish the time line and what contact has taken place. We will ask you:

- When did your child first develop symptoms?
- If they did not have symptoms, when were they tested?
- Did your child have contact with any other child, or member of staff, from OLW School 48 hours prior to developing symptoms or, if they had no symptoms, from when they had their test?
- Did they have contact with any other child, or member of staff, from OLW School when symptomatic – 10 days from when symptoms started.

Similar arrangements are in place where a member of staff tests positive

What will school do next?

School leaders will identify all children and members of staff who are direct or close contacts. All direct and close contacts will be excluded from school and advised to self-isolate for 14 days starting from the day they were last in contact with the case. For example, if the case tests positive on Thursday and was last in school on the previous Monday the first day of the 14 day period is on the Monday.

Household members of contacts do not need to self-isolate unless the contact develops symptoms.

Siblings should continue to attend school.

Who is considered a contact in a school setting?

A contact is defined as a person who has had contact (see below) at any time from 48 hours before onset of symptoms (or test if asymptomatic) to 10 days after onset of symptoms (or test):

- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre) with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), including:
 - being coughed on, or
 - having a face-to-face conversation, or
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
 - any contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact

- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle *with* someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or in a large vehicle *near* someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

How will school inform us that our child is a contact and has to isolate?

We will email a letter via ParentPay, the letter will include the date when isolation ends and the child can return to school, if well. We will also send a text requesting you check your emails. The letter will contain a link to an online form. Please complete as soon as possible, it asks that you acknowledge you have received the letter and you understand the contents of the letter. We will never release case details

Will school tell the rest of the school community?

Yes, we will email a letter via ParentPay explaining that we have a confirmed case within OLW School. This is for information purposes only, if your child is not a contact you do not need to take any further action. We will never release case details.

Can the siblings of a child who has been excluded because they are a contact of a case attend school?

Yes, other household members of the contact do not need to self-isolate. If the contact, or anyone within the household, develop symptoms all household members must isolate.

My child is a direct or a close contact and has been told to self-isolate. Can they leave home?

No, they must stay at home. They are not, for example, allowed to travel to school in a car to drop off siblings. They are allowed to exercise in their garden, if you have one. They do not have to isolate in one room and they can have normal contact with other household members.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

We know it may be challenging to get siblings to school where another child is self-isolating. Please contact Mrs Lloyd, OLW's Family Support Manager, and we will talk through your circumstances and what we can do to support you.

If my child, who is a contact of a confirmed case, tests negative, can they return to school?

No, the child should complete 14 days of isolation.

What happens if someone in my household (not my child) tests positive or is symptomatic?

All household members (and support bubble) should complete 14 days of isolation. School will take no further action. The bubble/close contacts of the child are not required to isolate or to be excluded from school UNLESS the child *tests positive* and they had attended the school in the 48 hours prior to developing symptoms. In this event, close contacts will be identified and advised regarding self-isolation.

Section 4 Arrangements for Home Learning

If a child, or group of children, are isolating we will make arrangements for children to continue with their education from home. We are in the process of finalising our Remote Learning Policy and this will be shared with parents in the coming weeks.