

Covid-19 update from the Education and Skills Team

Professional Advocates for Children in Education, Governor Support, NQTs, Early Years, the Virtual School for Looked after Children and In Year Fair Access

Back to normal next term?

The bulk of this bulletin is taken up with a summary of all the things Derby leaders will not have to do next term. We know this has had a mixed reception after talking to many of you. Please be assured that we will continue to provide support and advice where we can and so will our new best friends in CCT. We are still getting our heads around what it means, particularly in relation to testing which has even greater importance for safety. In the meantime, our communications team has provided an image you may wish to use on your social media channels. Some schools are having a really hard time at the moment and not all parents completely understand the difficult position school leaders are in.

On to the summer – we have had a few enquiries about whether there will be any additional support for families with children eligible for free school meals over the summer. Of course, there will be lots of activities which include food – we were able to identify our chosen providers at the end of last week with the support of Community Action Derby (thank you), and Shaheen will share a little about this at HSLM. We will also use the usual communication channels that reach every school and academy so keep a look out and please promote to your disadvantaged families.

In addition to this, we have already let you know that there has been a recently announced summer grant from the government. We are in the final stages of designing a scheme, which will be presented for the approval of local politicians in the middle of next week. We are exploring the use of a national voucher scheme as part of that proposal which, if agreed, we could use to issue voucher codes in a letter explaining how and where to redeem them. There are other elements also under consideration.

As soon as we are able, we will let you know what is happening. We would have liked to have given you more notice but we are hopeful that our proposals will be simpler for schools and academies to enact. Fingers crossed...

Pauline, Jo and the E&S team

7 Jul 2021

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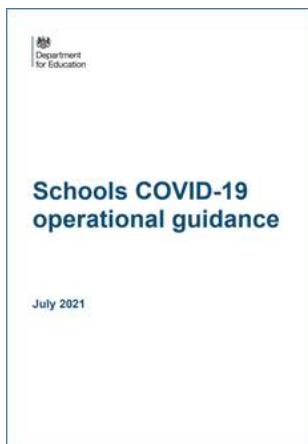
After July 19th

The link below takes you to a press release with a summary of the changes to the Covid-19 schools guidance, expected to take place on 19th July.

[Covid restrictions in education settings to end at Step 4 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/covid-restrictions-in-education-settings-to-end-at-step-4)

As a very quick summary – bubbles will end, social distancing will ‘no longer be necessary’ (and I quote), schools won’t need to stagger start and finish times (and I quote) but you can continue as you are until the end of term if you want to. In the middle of the summer holiday (16th August if all goes to the Prime Minister’s ‘plan’), the legal requirement to self-isolate for contacts of a positive case will end for everyone aged under 18, and for adults who have been fully vaccinated. So next term, only the children or adults or test positive will need to self-isolate. Schools will no longer carry out contact tracing (NHS Test and Trace will take over), close contacts will be advised to take a PCR test and only self-isolate if it is positive. Children must self-isolate if they have symptoms of Covid or a positive test result. Testing for close contacts under 18 will be split into two categories. All Primary, Secondary and College age children should take a single PCR test. Early Years children should only take a PCR test if a member of their household tests positive.

And now in a bit more detail- as of today there are two versions of this operational guidance. One takes you up to July 19th and one afterwards.



Afterwards:

As COVID-19 ‘becomes a virus that we learn to live with’, the government has decided that the risk to children is ‘extremely low’, adults have been offered a first vaccine with a second by mid-September and so face to face education is now the priority. However:

- ‘You must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures.’
- ‘You must regularly review and update your risk assessments - treating them as ‘living documents’, as the circumstances in your school and the public health advice changes.’ This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor whether the controls are effective and working as planned. (Annex A has more detail on this. We intend to talk to our Health and Safety team to see what advice and help we can offer here.)

The government will no longer recommend that it is necessary to keep children in consistent groups (‘bubbles’). So there will be no bubbles needed in Summer Schools, HAF (one presumes although it isn’t mentioned) or in the Autumn term. Leaders can continue until the end of the summer term if you want to. Assemblies can resume.

However:

- You should make sure your 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.

You will not be expected to do contact tracing after this time – NHS Test and Trace will take over. BUT ‘you may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.’

From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old will no longer be required to self-isolate if they are contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case. Instead, children will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test. The DfE encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so. (18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children until 4 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated, after which they will be treated as adults.) In Derby, we will continue to work with local health protection teams (i.e. CCT) in the case of a local outbreak.

If there is an outbreak in a setting or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, the director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures. ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of schools or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

After July 19th cont'd...

Face coverings will no longer be advised for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. Face coverings are also no longer recommended to be worn on dedicated transport to school or college and are no longer legally required on public transport. If you have an outbreak in your school, the director of public health might advise you that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms. You should make sure your outbreak management plans cover this possibility. (The guidance then talks about transparent face coverings and communication.)

Any measures in schools should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of schools or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

If you have several confirmed cases within 14 days, you may have an outbreak. You should call the dedicated advice service who will escalate the issue to your local health protection team where necessary and advise if any additional action is required, such as implementing elements of your outbreak management plan. You can reach them by calling the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting option 1 for advice on the action to take in response to a positive case. **In Derby, keep letting CCT and us know please.**

The contingency framework describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 in education and childcare settings. Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs) can recommend measures described in the contingency framework in individual education and childcare settings – or a small cluster of settings – as part of their outbreak management responsibilities

For your website and social media

Attached to the email with this bulletin is an image for schools to use on your websites and social media channels. Please use the message below with this image.

"COVID-19 cases are rising in the city. If your child is asked to self-isolate along with their school bubble, it's more important than ever that the child is kept at home to prevent further spreading of the virus. They shouldn't be attending activity groups, parties or mixing with other children at local parks."

PPE info updated for the next phase of Covid-19



The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including for aerosol generating procedures (AGPs)

The DfE have removed sector information on the controls measures and included information on the use of personal protective equipment, including for aerosol generating procedures.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care

Of interest to specialist settings?

Guidance

Rapid asymptomatic testing in specialist settings

Updated 6 July 2021

This guidance has been updated to reflect the introduction of nasal swab only tests at asymptomatic testing sites.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Additional information for special settings and people



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Some key areas of change include:

- Workforce, including staff who are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) - Clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) people are no longer advised to shield, but may wish to take extra precautions to protect themselves, and to follow the practical steps set out in the CEV guidance to minimise their risk of exposure to the virus. There will be more guidance on this.
- Attendance, including specialist, AP and post-16 settings and children and young people who are CEV - There are some groups of children and young people who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. This group of people have been told directly by their GP or hospital clinician, or have received a letter, confirming that they are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV). We no longer advise those who are CEV to shield
- Remote education – You need to be ready to move to remote education where necessary. Some pupils and students with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support and so expect schools and colleges to work collaboratively with families and put in place reasonable adjustments so that pupils with SEND can successfully access remote education appropriate for their level of need.
- Home to school transport – DfE will shortly be updating the transport to schools and other places of education guidance to reflect changes to the guidance for schools that will commence from the start of the autumn term.
- Protection measures (formally the 'system of controls') – as with the main guidance.

