

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

The Pandemic Goes On, But...

There is a great deal of information in this bulletin linked to all the things that Derby leaders are not now doing (yes, we know...)

Feeling a little sad on your behalf, to be honest. Thank you for working so hard through all of this nightmare. Derby leaders, teachers, support staff and young people have done remarkably well in keeping the virus under control this year, with some periods of hope and peacefulness here and there. You all deserve medals as far as we are concerned. We know that this virus appears to be different and that there is a lot of it about at the moment. We can get to Friday – with a few year groups or bubbles (perish the thought) self-isolating along the way – and then we can all rest.

We will be putting out a bulletin on Thursday and then there will be no more until September. We don't know what the landscape will look like at that point – if Derby leaders still need this level of support, we will start up again. We will also keep a close eye on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (Derby's Summer promise) and any cases arising in those settings. And for those secondaries running summer schools, we are still here.

Chin up everyone (and don't forget your face masks!)

Pauline, Jo and the E&S team



20 Jul 2021

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Testing

The DfE have reminded headteachers that consent for testing will need to be sought for new students such as into Year 7 but previous consents can be assumed. There is a form that can be used on [secondary schools and colleges document sharing platform](#). Leaders are advised to keep records of consents. One way to do this is on the [COVID-19 test register](#). Secondary students and staff attending summer schools and the like should continue the twice weekly testing at home.

Anyone who tests positive using an LFD test will be asked to take a confirmatory follow-up PCR test. **It remains essential that anyone who gets a positive LFD result self-isolates immediately, along with other members of their household, pending the confirmatory PCR result.**

A PCR test will confirm if someone has been affected by COVID-19 and will reduce unnecessary self-isolation by their household. Individuals who test negative from an LFD test will not need to isolate or take a confirmatory PCR test.

Here are some links to the guidance on self-isolation. (PS We were going to include these as reminders anyway, even before Sajid Javid tested positive!)

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person>

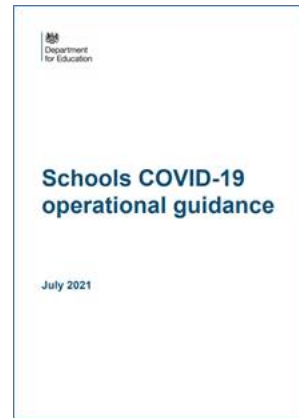
Changes to Contact Tracing

Following our appeal in the last bulletin for headteachers to continue to track close contacts this week, we understand that the DfE have been very insistent that this must stop. We would like to be a fly on the wall when Test and Trace ask a four-year-old who they have been sitting close to, but hopefully we are being overly pessimistic about their talents.

Thank you for being willing.

The DfE have recorded a [webinar](#) which provides information on the key changes to COVID-19 measures such as 'bubbles', contact tracing, face coverings, self-isolation and testing after July 19th.

Updated guidance from July 19th



Leaders are by now familiar with the full suite of these guidances for mainstream, special schools, early years, for parents etc etc. They have all been updated again. The changes are to explain that although the requirement to wear face coverings has been removed from law, there is still a recommendation that they are worn in enclosed or crowded spaces including public transport and dedicated transport such as for pupils with SEND.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak

Meanwhile, time to think about flu



“For the 2021 to 2022 flu season, the flu vaccination programme that already includes all children in primary school will be expanded to additional children in secondary school so that those in years 7 to 11 will now be offered flu vaccination. This significant expansion in the programme is part of the government’s wider winter planning to reduce flu levels in the population, and therefore the potential impact on the NHS, when we are likely to see both flu and coronavirus (COVID-19) in circulation.”

Schools will be asked to promote this programme and to provide support where possible.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccination-in-schools>

The last week of the academic year – a significant reduction in control measures

Guidance
Schools COVID-19 operational guidance
Updated 19 July 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

This guidance was updated yesterday to take out the section on contact tracing and Annex A – the health and safety risk assessment. Bubbles have now gone and control measures reduced to four things:

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

This updated guidance also has new information on the clinically extremely vulnerable – pupils and staff. For staff, the DfE advise that CEV people should follow the same guidance as everyone else. Social distancing measures have now ended in the workplace and it is no longer necessary for the government to instruct people to work from home. Employers should be able to explain the measures they have in place to keep CEV staff safe at work. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published guidance on [protecting vulnerable workers](#), including advice for employers and employees on [how to talk about reducing risks in the workplace](#). Further information can be found in the [guidance on protecting people who are CEV from COVID-19](#).

(Here in Derby, we continue to urge care and caution where you have the flexibility to maintain some of the deleted practices such as face coverings. As we all know, it hasn't gone away.)

The latest information for parents

Guidance
What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges
Updated 19 July 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Along with the updates to the schools guidance documents, the one for parents and carers has also been updated. The key messages contained within are:

- nationally, education and childcare settings are open, and attendance is mandatory (for schools) and strongly encouraged (at childminders, nurseries and colleges)
- the [Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health](#) has made it clear that the overwhelming majority of children and young people still have no symptoms or very mild illness only
- over the summer, staff, secondary pupils and college students should continue to test regularly if they are attending settings that remain open
- continuing to take regular rapid tests will help you to identify infections early and reduce transmission
- there is no need for primary age pupils (those in year 6 and below) to test over the summer period
- secondary schools and colleges have been asked to prepare for on-site testing at the beginning of the autumn term
- your nursery, school or college will no longer trace close contacts - close contacts will still be identified via NHS Test and Trace
- your child does not need to remain in a consistent group ('bubble')
- the government is removing the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet.

(We already know from yesterday in Derby that Test and Trace have asked for some school help in deciding who is a close contact.)

The General Health and Safety Duties for Schools

Guidance

Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools

Updated 19 July 2021

www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools

Now that the vast majority of additional safety measures have been removed, this overall guidance has been updated with some specific C-19 content in Section 5 and copied below.

“Schools must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. Schools must regularly review and update their COVID-19 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.

Schools must therefore make sure that a risk assessment has been undertaken to identify the measures needed to reduce the risks from COVID-19 so far as is reasonably practicable. General information on how to make a workplace COVID-secure, including how to approach a COVID-19 risk assessment, is provided by the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\) guidance on working safely](#).”

“Some types of control are more effective at reducing COVID-19 risks than others. Risk reduction measures should be assessed in order of priority as set out below. Schools should not simply adopt the easiest control measure to implement. Schools should work through the following steps to address their COVID-19 risks, considering for each risk whether there are measures in each step they can adopt before moving onto the next step.

1. Elimination: stop an activity that is not considered essential if there are risks attached.
2. Substitution: replace the activity with another that reduces the risk. Care is required to avoid introducing new hazards due to the substitution.
3. Engineering controls: design measures that help control or mitigate risk.
4. Administrative controls: identify and implement the procedures to improve safety (for example, markings on the floor, signage).
5. Having gone through this process, personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used in circumstances [where the guidance says it is required](#).”

Catch-Up information for parents and carers

The DfE has launched an [information site](#) for parents, to support children of all age ranges and abilities catch up on lost learning from the pandemic. The site features advice and support for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as programmes, resources and activities for children and young people this summer.

Nearly there...

