

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

Cases continue to rise in Derby schools

We think it is really important to start with a reassurance that we know Derby leaders are finding things extremely tough at the moment. There are some common themes that headteachers are grappling with that don't appear to be acknowledged nationally. Here are a few:

- The high numbers of staff absent because of Covid – this can be because they have Covid, their children have Covid or because they haven't been vaccinated and so are self-isolating because of contact with positive covid cases in the school. There is a lack of supply and a lack of school budget to pay for it.
- The pressure from some parents questioning the decisions headteachers make to ensure face to face education can be maximised. It doesn't help that the national impression is that Covid is over – it most certainly isn't over in Derby schools.
- Misery and frustration that leaders are spending all of their time managing Covid so they can't do what they came into teaching and leadership to do – that focus on teaching and learning and school development.
- Confusion from staff over what our local health teams are now allowed to advise.

On this last point we have highlighted the powers of local health teams in the extract overleaf. To be clear, we cannot provide blanket advice that contradicts the government (even when we believe that the government is wrong). We CAN provide advice to individual schools in outbreak on what additional mitigations are recommended. We know why you are confused – so many of you are in outbreak that you are all getting individual advice but of course the individual advice is largely the same. These are multiple sets of individual advice NOT blanket advice for Derby. Clear????

Finally, we really do care. Please stick with it – Derby has such great headteachers, leaders, teachers and support staff and we continue to be in it together. We meet weekly with the health team and we will do as much as we can to feed our distress back to our national leaders.

Pauline, Jo and the E&S team

Nothing new in this update – test kits

..but could be useful to have in one place the latest on PCR testing and self-isolation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-home-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers>

Guidance
Coronavirus (COVID-19): test kits for schools and FE providers
Updated 24 January 2022

27 Jan 2022

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Some facts and figures about CO2 monitors and air purifiers

Apparently 1550 schools nationwide applied for air purifiers and 1265 have been successful.



CO2 monitors evaluation survey and applications for DfE-funded air cleaning units

CO2 Monitors Evaluation Survey

The Department has delivered over 353,000 CO2 monitors to state-funded settings to support them in being able to assess ventilation needs in their setting. On 10 December, the Department invited 36,493 settings to participate in an ad-hoc survey to evaluate how the monitors are being used. The survey closed on 17 December with 4,367 responses.

Findings

- 96% of settings that responded to the survey confirmed they had begun using the CO2 monitors provided by the Department
- Of those settings that had begun using the monitors, 95% confirmed they were able to use them to identify when ventilation in a room needed to increase
- 12% of settings using the monitors reported sustained high CO2 readings of 1500ppm and above – the majority of these were able to remedy this through quick fixes, e.g. opening windows
- 3% of settings using the monitors reported sustained high CO2 readings of 1500ppm and above that could not be remedied through quick fixes or remedial building works

This data is being published as a one-off release.

Applications for DfE-funded air cleaning units

The Department is providing air cleaning units to state-funded education settings that made an eligible application for poorly ventilated teaching spaces where quick fixes to improve ventilation are not possible. Data on the total number of settings that applied to the Department for air cleaning units is set out below. Those settings who applied but did not receive units did not meet the eligibility criteria set out in our guidance.

Applications from all eligible setting types

This data is correct as of 21 January 2022.

| | |
|---|------|
| Settings that applied for air cleaning units | 1550 |
| Settings that will receive air cleaning units | 1265 |

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[CO2 monitors evaluation survey and applications for DfE-funded air cleaning units \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Extra money announced for secondary school vaccinations

[More support for schools and students as plan B comes to an end - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

This information links to the news in the DfE email to heads about a one-off payment of £1000 to support implementation of the teenage vaccination programme.

Press release

More support for schools and students as plan B comes to an end

£8 million from NHS England to support secondary schools with the in-school vaccination programme.

From: [Department for Education](#), [Department of Health and Social Care](#), [NHS England](#), [The Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP](#), and [The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP](#)
Published 24 January 2022



Update linked to recent changes



Contingency framework: education and childcare settings

January 2022

Face coverings – on page 14, there is more detail about what the government would like to happen regarding face masks in schools. As we know, the government does not advise face coverings at the moment. We know that secondary school leaders in particular have seen the impact of face coverings on their ability to maintain face to face education so this is not a straightforward decision. Our local health team, led by Dr Dewis, are still able to advise additional mitigations where cases are high. Our priority in all of this is to maintain face to face education as much as possible and to avoid school, class or bubble closures. The contingency framework includes this section which sets out what we can do locally:

“Face coverings in communal areas may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by DsPH:

- for an individual setting, as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management
- for settings across areas where DfE and public health experts judge the measure to be proportionate, based on the evidence public health experts share with the DfE and specific local public health concerns. For example, where the area has been designated as an enhanced response area, and where transmission patterns may put exceptional local pressure on the healthcare system. This is a temporary measure. Face coverings in classrooms and teaching spaces may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by DsPH for an individual setting, as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management. Face coverings in classrooms and teaching spaces should only ever be recommended across an area if it has been designated as an enhanced response area by the Local Action Committee command structure.”

Please continue to seek advice from our local public health team (CCT) if you have concerns about cases in your school. As we know, our local figures are much more accurate than national because of what we have discovered about national reporting. When to report to the local team is explained in more detail on page 12 of this document.