

# 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

## Changing fast

As the country responds to our prime minister's decision that we must now live with Covid, there are a number of changed arrangements in March and more on the way for April. At the moment, adults can order lateral flow tests every 72 hours and we know that many are doing so, so that we can continue to check for a little longer when we have symptoms.

Although cases do seem to be falling a little, they are still high we believe. As testing reduces we will be less and less certain of this and will have to rely on old fashioned methods such as guessing from our symptoms. As a point of interest, the Zoe app is still in operation and does give an alternative indication of case rates.

We know that Derby leaders appreciated the letters to parents and to headteachers from Dr Dewis – we are all in need of reminders about what we should and should not be doing as the changing advice swirls around us.

Thank you for all that you are doing in Derby – despite everything, we are convinced that nobody could be doing this better than you.

Take care and stay safe

Pauline, Jo and the E&S team

9 Mar 2022

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## Sick pay during periods of self-isolation

The National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services have issued workforce advice regarding COVID-19 throughout the pandemic. Derby City Council follow the advice from NJC and encourage all schools in Derby to also do so. In relation to sick pay for self-isolation, the NJC advise that, as per the 'Green Book' sickness scheme at Part 2 Para 10.9:

*"An employee who is prevented from attending work because of contact with infectious disease shall be entitled to receive normal pay. The period of absence on this account shall not be reckoned against the employee's entitlements under this scheme"*

In the event that an employee is required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status, the provision above should be applied.

Similar terms are included in the 'Burgundy Book' for School Teachers in England and Wales at Para 10.

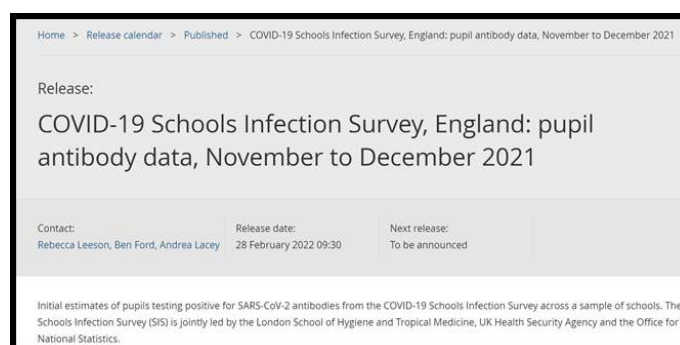
In light of the recent changes removing the legal requirement to self-isolate it is worth reviewing your school's practices to ensure you are not discouraging members of staff from isolating when they have COVID-19. Please refer to your HR provider for further advice on this.

## More changes from April

The DfE have now announced that the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) advice service will be decommissioned from 1 April 2022. The UKHSA advice service was introduced in September 2020 to provide advice to schools on the action they should take to respond to positive cases of coronavirus. The DfE's COVID-19 helpline will continue to run after the UKHSA advice service is decommissioned.

In Derby, our local advice will continue to be available when schools have outbreaks even though we are no longer able to compare with secure national data. We no longer need to know about individual cases.

## Covid data anyone?



Home > Release calendar > Published > COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey, England: pupil antibody data, November to December 2021

Release:

COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey, England: pupil antibody data, November to December 2021

Contact:	Release date:	Next release:
Rebecca Leeson, Ben Ford, Andrea Lacey	28 February 2022 09:30	To be announced

Initial estimates of pupils testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 antibodies from the COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey across a sample of schools. The Schools Infection Survey (SIS) is jointly led by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK Health Security Agency and the Office for National Statistics.

[COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey, England: pupil antibody data, November to December 2021 - Office for National Statistics](#)

## Changed arrangements for PCR test kits

Guidance  
**Coronavirus (COVID-19): test kits for schools and FE providers**

Updated 2 March 2022

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-kits-for-schools-and-fe-providers)

At the moment, schools can continue to offer test kits to individuals with symptoms of C-19 according to your prioritisation (i.e. especially those people who you think would have difficulty otherwise). A reminder that schools are not expected to administer these tests -parents will oversee away from the school site. Currently, you can order additional kits if you are running out. You can [order additional tests kits online](#). PCR kits will be supplied in boxes of 10. You will be able to make a new order for test kits 21 days after you receive a delivery confirmation email telling you that your previous supply of PCR kits has been sent.

Be aware that this arrangement will change in April although we believe the ordering line for schools will remain in place for exceptional circumstances.

## The DfE Attendance online collection

We have been asked by a few school leaders if schools are supposed to be filling this in any more. The answer came this week – from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March, this will become a weekly rather than daily chore with a reduction in the number of questions too. Data collection day will be Thursdays. This arrangement will continue to Easter after which there will be another review.

(However, if your school has to close then you can use this form on other days to make this report.)

## Linked to attendance, this addendum to the attendance guidance has now been updated



[www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance)

This guidance sets out how schools should record where pupils are not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus in the 2021/22 academic year.

- Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19, or have a positive test, should follow the guidance on [people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#). Code X should be used to record where a pupil is not attending school in line with guidance while awaiting a test result.
- Pupils who test positive are advised to stay at home in line with public health guidance. After a pupil tests positive for COVID-19, they should be recorded as code I (illness) whilst they are absent from school.
- Pupils who have not had a PCR test, for example due to a disability, but who have symptoms of COVID-19 should follow guidance about staying at home in [people with COVID-19 and their contacts](#). The school should record the pupil as code X in the register.
- If a pupil is not attending school because their attendance would be contrary to government guidance around COVID-19, schools should offer them access to remote education. Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

## Also there is this one about mental health and long covid

[COVID-19 Schools Infection Survey, England: mental health and long COVID, November to December 2021 - Office for National Statistics](#)

