

## **Covid 19 updated guidance – Nov 2021**

### **Risk assessment**

You must comply and regularly review and update your risk assessments. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor whether the controls are effective and working as planned.

### **Mixing and ‘bubbles’**

It is no longer necessary to keep learners in consistent groups (‘bubbles’).

### **Tracing close contacts and self-isolation**

Close contacts will be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case to identify close contacts. Contacts from a setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.

Individuals are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they’re fully vaccinated
- they’re below the age of 18 years 6 months
- they’ve taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they’re not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

NHS Test and Trace will contact individuals to let them know that they have been identified as a contact and check whether they are legally required to self-isolate. If they’re not legally required to self-isolate, they will be provided with advice on testing and given guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19. Even if they do not have symptoms, they will be advised to have a PCR test as soon as possible. If they are symptomatic they should stay at home.

### **Face coverings**

Face coverings are no longer advised for students, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas.

The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where an individual may

come into contact with people they do not normally meet. This includes public transport and dedicated transport to college.

### *In circumstances where face coverings are recommended*

If you have an outbreak in your setting a director of public health might advise you that face coverings should temporarily be worn in communal areas or classrooms (by students, staff and visitors, unless exempt).

### **Stepping measures up and down**

You should have outbreak management plans outlining how you would operate if there were an outbreak in your setting or local area. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on students, any measures in settings should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

### **Control measures**

You should:

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.

### **Ensure good hygiene for everyone**

#### **Hand hygiene**

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that students clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

#### **Respiratory hygiene**

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important.

#### **Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Most staff in providers will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work.

#### **Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes using standard products such as detergents**

You should put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This could include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.

## **Keep occupied spaces well ventilated**

When your setting is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

You should identify any poorly ventilated spaces as part of your risk assessment, and take steps to improve fresh air flow in these areas, giving particular consideration to holding events where visitors are on site.

## **Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19**

### **When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test**

Students, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on [when to self isolate](#). They should not come into the setting if they have [symptoms](#) or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine or have a positive test).

If anyone in your setting develops COVID-19 symptoms, however mild, you should send them home and they should follow public health advice.

### **When to self-isolate**

Self-isolate straight away and get a PCR test (a test that is sent to the lab) on GOV.UK as soon as possible if you have any of these 3 symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

You should also self-isolate straight away if:

- you've tested positive for COVID-19 – this means you have the virus
- someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive (unless you are not required to self-isolate – check below if this applies to you)
- you've been told to self-isolate following contact with someone who tested positive