

Solihull Council Public Health

Guidance for managing outbreaks of possible COVID-19/respiratory infections in educational & childcare settings

Should you require any advice on a possible COVID-19/respiratory infection outbreak for your education or childcare setting, please see below:

Pupils under 18 years

List of symptoms of COVID-19/respiratory infections to be aware of – [click here](#)

Advice if a person under 18 tests positive for COVID-19 – [click here](#)

Staff and students over 18 years

List of COVID-19/respiratory infection symptoms to be aware of – [click here](#)

Advice if an adult over 18 tests positive for COVID-19 – [click here](#)

Staff and pupils at a higher risk of serious illness from respiratory infections

For information on people at **higher risk** of becoming seriously unwell from a respiratory infection, including COVID-19 – [click here](#) Further information is also available in the guidance on [supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#).

When to report or get in touch:

- **Mainstream Schools/settings** - you only need to contact Solihull Council Public Health/DfE incident support line in the case of a **large/complex outbreak** in exceptional circumstances and you require advice (see below)
- **Special schools** – please contact Solihull Council Public Health when you have **5-10 linked cases** of possible COVID-19/respiratory infection

How to report/get in touch:

Email advice request to healthprotection@solihull.gov.uk with a contact phone number/email address and you will be contacted directly during the same business day between **9.00am & 4.30pm Monday to Friday**.

For outbreaks of other infectious diseases (such as Norovirus, Tuberculosis or Legionella), please contact the [West Midlands East Health Protection Team](#) [link] at the [UK Health Security Agency](#) or refer to [guidance](#).

Should you have any operational difficulties at any stage please contact your School Adviser at Solihull Council.

Thresholds:

Mainstream schools/settings (Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Further Education)		
	Impact	Action
Low	A number of staff or student absences who are likely to have mixed closely* due to possible COVID-19/respiratory infection.	Click here for actions

Medium	Rapidly increasing numbers of staff or student absences who are likely to have mixed closely* due to possible COVID-19/respiratory infection.	Click here for actions
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A higher than previously experienced number of staff or student absences due to possible COVID-19/respiratory infection. ▪ Evidence of severe disease due to possible COVID-19/respiratory infection, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to possible COVID-19. ▪ A cluster of possible cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group 	Click here for actions and contact healthprotection@solihull.gov.uk or the DfE incident support line on 0800 046 8687

Special Schools/Alternative Provision (AP)		
Impact		Action
Low	2 - 4 children, pupils, students and staff who possibly have COVID-19/respiratory infection or test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period who are likely to have mixed closely*	Click here for actions
Medium	Between 5 and 10 children, pupils, students and staff who possibly have COVID-19/respiratory infection or test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period who are likely to have mixed closely* , and/or there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable individuals within the affected group	Click here for actions and contact healthprotection@solihull.gov.uk or the DfE incident support line on 0800 046 8687
High	10 or more children, pupils, students and staff who possibly have COVID-19/respiratory infection or test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period who are likely to have mixed closely*, and/or there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable individuals within the affected group	Click here for actions and contact healthprotection@solihull.gov.uk or the DfE incident support line on 0800 046 8687

Continue for advice:

Stage 1:				
Measure	Action	Early Years/ Primary	Secondary	Special/AP
Ventilation	Review ventilation and increase where possible in areas where possible cases have been	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure CO ₂ monitors are in place to monitor for poorly ventilated areas	✓	✓	✓
Cleaning & hygiene	Review and reinforce hand & respiratory hygiene actions (catch it, bin it, kill it – using tissues/crook of elbow for coughs/sneezes and washing hands thoroughly for 20 seconds or more)	✓	✓	✓

	Ensure affected areas (classes/rooms where threshold has been met) are cleaned thoroughly, in particular frequent touchpoints/shared equipment	✓	✓	✓
Zoning	Consider zoning to reduce mixing between classes/year groups.	✓	✓	✓
	Separate affected groups/classes from other groups during breaks/lunchtime	✓	✓	✓
	Avoid sharing of equipment, toys etc beyond an affected group where possible and clean any resources/equipment thoroughly before sharing it wider	✓	✓	✓
Communication	Consider informing families that there is a respiratory virus circulating in the school/setting their school year/class.	✓	✓	✓
	Ensure parents/carers know to be vigilant for a cough, respiratory symptoms, a high temperature and loss/change in taste/smell. Inform parents/carers and staff to stay-at-home if unwell until 48 hours fever-free and feeling well.	✓	✓	✓

Stage 2: In addition to the measures above, please take the actions below:

Measure	Action	Early Years/ Primary	Secondary	Special/AP
Staffing	Ensure key Senior Leadership Team and Safeguarding leads keep to 2m distancing, where possible move staff meetings online to protect staff and reduce operational/staffing pressure. This includes staff rooms and use of communal areas.	✓	✓	✓
Gatherings/ groups	Consider taking activities such as PE, classes or assemblies outdoors	✓	✓	✓
	Consider virtual staff meetings/assemblies	✓	✓	✓
	Advise staff members to stay at a 2 metre distance from one another and from pupils where possible	Not possible in Foundation or KS1	✓	Not possible
Cleaning	Consider a one-off clean of the whole school/setting	✓	✓	✓
Gatherings/ Groups/ visits	Consider moving parent facing events like assemblies, parent consultations, open days to virtual meetings at the discretion of the Headteacher, especially if there are concerns of virus transmission impacting staff/pupil absence.	✓	✓	✓

Stage 3:				
Measure	Action	Early Years/ Primary	Secondary	Special/AP
Face coverings	<p>Face coverings in communal areas may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by Public Health for an individual setting or for settings across areas where DfE and public health experts judge the measure to be proportionate.</p> <p>Face coverings in classrooms and teaching spaces may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by Public Health for an individual setting or across an area (only if it has been designated as an enhanced response area). Children of primary school age and early years children or those who are exempt should not be advised to wear face coverings.</p> <p>Face coverings are a temporary measure subject to regular review.</p>	✓ (not for pupils)	✓	✓ on local risk assessment
Remote learn	<p>Partial remote learning offer (some classes/year groups) in exceptional circumstances ONLY IF OTHER MEASURES HAVE NOT REDUCED TRANSMISSION OR due to OPERATIONAL ISSUES.</p> <p>If any classes do need to close due to operational difficulties, please ensure children eligible for free school meals are provided with a voucher and vulnerable children/young people have wellbeing checks.</p>	✓	✓	✓
IMT	In exceptional circumstances, an Incident Management Team (IMT) meeting could be convened by Solihull Council Public Health or UKHSA to support outbreak management.	✓	✓	✓

*** Definition of mixed closely**

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting as follows:

In early years:

- a childminder minding children, including their own
- childminders working together on the same site
- a nursery class/group and their staff
- a friendship group who often play together
- staff and children taking part in the same activity session together

For primary and secondary schools:

- a form group or subject class
- smaller intervention groups
- a friendship group sat together/mixing at lunch/break times
- a sports team

- a group in before after-school care or activity session
- pupils or staff who travel to and from school together (including walking groups, cycling groups and school transport)

For wraparound childcare or out-of-school settings:

- a private tutor or coach offering one-to-one tuition to a child, or to multiple children at the same time
- staff and children taking part in the same class or activity session together
- children who have slept in the same room or dormitory together

For further education colleges:

- students and teachers on practical courses that require close hands-on teaching, such as hairdressing and barbering
- students who have played on sports teams together
- students and teachers who have mixed in the same classroom/seminar/teaching space
- students who have mixed socially during break/ lunchtimes

Further Information

Procedure for managing cases of COVID-19 in Solihull Education Settings - [Procedure for Managing Covid-19 Cases in Educational Settings in Solihull \[link\]](#)

Guidance specific to education and childcare that settings should now refer to includes:

- [UK Health Security Agency \(UKHSA\) health protection in education and childcare settings](#)
- [DfE emergency planning and response](#)
- [DfE good estate management for schools](#)

New and updated UKHSA guidance for the general population, which will also be relevant to education and childcare settings, includes:

- [guidance for people with symptoms of a respiratory infection including COVID-19, or a positive test result for COVID-19](#)
- [living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#)
- [ventilation of indoor spaces to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory infections](#)
- [COVID-19 guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk](#)

UKHSA Guidance on respiratory infections including Covid-19 - [Chapter 3: public health management of specific infectious diseases - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Spotty Book (infection prevention guidance) - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2021/08/spotty-book-2021.pdf>

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