

FAQs

What happens if I have COVID-19 symptoms or have tested positive in the last 7 days?

Children, pupils, students, staff and other adults do not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or have tested positive in the last 7 days. All staff must follow this process having been made aware of it.

What happens if someone becomes unwell while at school?

If anyone in school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they must be sent home and advised to follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#)', which sets out that they must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should arrange to have a test to see if they have coronavirus (COVID-19). Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the symptomatic person first had symptoms.

Where does someone go in school if they are unwell and are waiting to be picked up?

All ATLP schools will have a nominated room for this. Your headteacher or other school leader will tell you where this is as part of your 'back to school training'. It will also be highlighted in the school's opening management plan that will be shared with you.

The guidance is clear that if a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age and needs of the child, with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people

If someone is waiting to be collected and they need the bathroom, where do they go?

A separate bathroom/toilet should be used wherever possible. The site team must be informed so that it can be isolated, cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

Do I need to wear PPE if I am looking after someone who is unwell before they get picked up to go home?

PPE must be worn by staff caring for the child while they await collection *if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained* (such as for a very young child or a child with complex needs). More information on PPE use can be found in the [safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment \(PPE\) guidance](#).

What do I do if I suspect someone is unwell with COVID-19?

You must report it immediately by phoning the headteacher or the most senior designated person in the headteacher's absence. As is usual practice, in an emergency, call 999 if someone is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. After having done that, call the headteacher or their designated person.

Anyone with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If I've helped someone with symptoms what should I do?

Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms or any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive (see below) or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.

What's happening with hand-washing etc.?

Everyone must wash their hands regularly and thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or hand sanitiser. Each school will build in routines in their usual working day. This will be shared with you in your 'back to school training'.

NB Washing of hands, thoroughly, must take place after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household bleach after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the [COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance](#).

How will you manage the start of the day if you test the temperature of children?

We won't be testing the temperature of children as they arrive because Public Health England is clear that routinely taking the temperature of pupils is not recommended as this is an unreliable method for identifying coronavirus (COVID-19).

What if a child refuses to sanitise their hands?

The precise follow up will be determined by the school's behaviour policy. Like anything, persistent ignorance of school rules (and, in this case, national guidance) will not be tolerated. We will not compromise anyone's health through defiance unless there are specific circumstances such as those with complex needs or an EHCP that details such behaviours. In this case a specific risk assessment for the child should be in place from the SENCo.

Will you provide face masks for all the children?

No. Public Health England does not (based on current evidence) recommend the use of face coverings in schools. This evidence is being kept under review. If staff and students want to wear a face mask, this will be allowed. There will be a protocol for the appropriate disposing/storing of masks worn on public transport.

Will there be an enhanced cleaning rota?

Yes, and this will obviously be school specific.

Shouldn't we be making the groups smaller and having rotas to keep us safe?

The latest [guidance](#) makes clear the DFE preference not to have rotas due to the detriment this might have on the child's education, given they have already missed half of a school year. The guidance also permits larger teaching groups, supported by Public Health England, so long as other protective measures are adhered to,

What will happen about assemblies?

The guidance says that "schools should avoid large gatherings such as assemblies or collective worship with more than one group" so each school will hold assemblies in their bubbles or by other means in order to keep the group together and avoid contact with others.

What will you do about staffrooms and shared staff spaces?

This is school-specific but we expect that they "are set up and used to help staff to distance from each other.' Each school's plans will be outlined in the management plan that will be shared with you.

Are you working with NHS Test and Trace?

Yes, we registered with them as soon as it went live. We must work with them and part of planning covers ensuring you understand your role and responsibilities as detailed in the guidance: Schools must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process and how to contact their local Public Health England health protection team. Schools must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:

- book a test if they are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms, and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
- provide details of anyone they have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
- self-isolate if they have been in close contact with someone who develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)

How do I get tested?

I think I've answered this above but the guidance also says that schools "will be provided with a small number of home testing kits that they can give directly to parents/carers collecting a child who has developed symptoms at school, or staff who have developed symptoms at school, where they think providing one will significantly increase the likelihood of them getting tested. Advice will be provided alongside these kits." We will let you know as soon as these arrive.

What do I do with my test result?

You should tell us immediately and the same will apply to the children and any family member that is tested.

What will happen if my child gets sent home from school and isn't symptomatic?

The guidance says that "Household members of those contacts who are sent home do not need to self-isolate themselves unless the child, young person or staff member who is self-isolating subsequently develops symptoms."

However, if this becomes a problem for you and the child can't be left alone then please phone your school straight away so they can better understand how to help.

How will we ensure we are all risk-free?

We can't. In the same way we could never say you free from the risk of getting a cold or the flu, there are risks all around us in all forms. All we can do is our best to work within the guidance from the Government and produce the best, detailed plans we can through the thorough scrutiny we've adopted so far.

What happens if we have more than one confirmed case in any one school?

We have to work with the health protection team who will advise if additional action is required. In some cases, health protection teams may recommend that a larger number of other pupils self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole site or year group. If each school is rigorously implementing controls from this list, addressing the risks they have identified and therefore reducing transmission risks, whole school closure based on cases within the school will not generally be necessary, and should not be considered except on the advice of health protection teams. If it gets to that we'll inform you immediately.

If I can work from home then do I need to come in?

The advice is changing to encourage everyone to go back to work. However, in order to limit the numbers on school sites and to support social distancing, staff in administrative and central teams like HR, Finance and Operations and Estates will have a mixture of home and onsite working. The detail of this will be communicated to you by your line manager.

I am clinically vulnerable so am I expected to come in?

Staff who have advised us that they are in this category will have had direct communication from HR and a risk assessment will have been undertaken.

I am clinically extremely vulnerable so what do I do?

Staff who have advised us that they are in this category will have had direct communication from HR and a risk assessment will have been undertaken.

I live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable so what should I do?

Staff who have advised us that they are living with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or clinically vulnerable will have had direct communication from HR.

I am pregnant so what do I do?

Staff who have made us aware that they are pregnant will be contacted by HR.

What if I still think I am at increased risk from COVID-19?

The guidance states "Some people with particular characteristics may be at comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), as set out in the **COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes report**. The reasons are complex and there is ongoing research to understand and translate these findings for individuals in the future. If people with significant risk factors are concerned, please contact one of the HR team. We have been having individual conversations and conducting individual risk assessments for the last few weeks. We will try as far as practically possible to accommodate additional measures where appropriate.

What do I do about going on holiday this summer?

We expect you to return with sufficient time to quarantine, if necessary, and be at work on Tuesday 1st September. We appreciate there may be individual circumstances; please do raise these with your HR team if we are not aware so that we can work with you.

Will I be able to run an educational visit?

The guidance currently states that "We continue to advise against domestic (UK) overnight and overseas educational visits at this stage see coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings. In the autumn term, schools can resume non-overnight domestic educational visits." So currently you can run day visits but not overnight. If you would like to run one then you must talk to your EVC about the reasons for it. You must, before you discuss it with your EVC, have consulted the [health and safety guidance on educational visits](#) when considering visits.

Are we to expect children back in uniform?

Yes, although each school is making adaptations to suit the current context.

What about my mental health when dealing with children's' mental health?

All staff have been advised of how they seek support which is through their HR Advisor who can support and/or sign post specific help. Alternatively, you can use the Employee Counselling Helpline- 0117 934 2121.

Or the organisations listed below

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

What happens if there's another spike and we have to lockdown?

If we have a spike in infection rates that is resulting in localised community spread, the appropriate authorities will decide which measures to implement to help contain the spread. The Department for Education will be involved in decisions at a local and national level affecting a geographical area, and will support those authorities and us to follow the health advice. The DfE will provide more information on this process in due course but I've already read the information about Leicester and I presume the DfE are using this information to build plans for other areas. In the case of either full or individual/class/pod isolation you will need to have remote learning available to educate the children in the way you were in lockdown.

How will school re-organise itself to do social distancing at break and lunch times?

Will there be a one way system to move around the school?

Will we be expected to use a different entrance?

This is site specific and will be communicated via the management plans that will be shared with you.

What are you doing about respiratory hygiene?

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important, so the individual schools must ensure that they have enough tissues and bins available to support pupils, students and staff to follow this routine. Tissues (and hand sanitiser) are to be added to the list of essential items brought to school by children/pupils.

How will toilets/water fountains/door handles be sanitised?

This will be covered through the enhanced cleaning rota on each site. In some cases, water fountains will be taken out of use.

I'm interested to know about parking? Do I have to have a certain gap between myself and other cars?

There is no requirement to create additional parking space. That said, all those who use cars have a moral responsibility to observe social distancing if they arrive at the same time as someone else and also happen to park in the adjacent space.

Will toilets (staff and student) be cordoned off? How will we know that these are being kept as clean as we would like?

This is a question for each of the sites as they'll have site specific arrangements. Again, these are a work in progress but we have enhanced the cleaning rota to ensure that they are cleaned throughout the day; especially after break, lunch and end of day. That said the guidance is that cubicles are ok to use and they'll be cleaned in the enhanced rota.

Will you clear out the clutter in the rooms to make more space?

We will make sure each site removes anything that stops the class from having as much space as possible and to provide the adults with sufficient space.

What are you doing about children/pupils arriving at the school in the mornings? Will there be staggered starts?

This is school-specific and will be detailed in the management plans.

Can we use a shared fridge to store my packed lunch?

Our intention is not to use communal fridges to avoid congregation and transfer across surfaces. Our preference is for you to bring some form of pre-prepared lunch that can survive safely out of refrigeration until you eat.

How do I get a coffee considering all options available are shared use?

The guidance is that all food and drink including utensils should be brought to work by each employee and taken home to be washed. Our intention is to minimise transfer and keep you all as safe as possible. That said, with rigorous adherence to good hygiene we believe it's ok to use kettles to make your own drink, with your own mug etc. It is strongly advised you also bring your own additives for hot drinks. Our preference is that you all bring a hot drink in a flask but we recognise not everyone will have one. As with all good hygiene, washing your hands regularly supports this advice/guidance.

(Where applicable) Are the air conditioning/fan units going to be turned off?

The guidance on this changed before 15th June and now the guidance states the air-conditioning can be turned on. If you need further information then please do check the guidance on "**Air conditioning and ventilation during coronavirus outbreak.**" Additionally though the guidance states that "In classrooms, it will be important that schools improve ventilation (for example, by opening windows)."

(Where applicable) Lift access – how does this work? E.g. who has access, etc... ?

Users need to stand back to back if more than 1 person is using the lift. No more than 2 occupants at any time standing back to back.

What is happening about transporting students by school bus?

There are two types of transport within the guidance. There's the typical school bus which is exclusive to our students and there's general public transport which means routes which are also used by the general public. The DfE will shortly be releasing additional guidance in providing transport so some of this is currently theoretical. Pupils on dedicated school services do not mix with the general public on those journeys and tend to be consistent. This means that the advice for passengers on public transport to adopt a social distance of two metres from people outside their household or support bubble, or a 'one metre plus' approach where this is not possible, will not apply from the autumn term on dedicated transport. We will work with our LAs to ensure:

- how pupils are grouped together on transport, where possible this should reflect the bubbles that are adopted within school
- use of hand sanitiser upon boarding and/or disembarking
- additional cleaning of vehicles
- organised queuing and boarding where possible
- distancing within vehicles wherever possible
- the use of face coverings for children over the age of 11, where appropriate, for example, if they are likely to come into very close contact with people outside of their group or who they do not normally meet

What will you do about re-opening and checking everything is safe?

Firstly, we cannot make it perfectly safe. I think I've already mentioned that there will inevitably be risks but what's most important is that we've consulted and listened and built robust risk assessments and control measures to mitigate those risks. *If you spot anything you think is amiss then you must report it* - it's the only way we can make sure that risk assessments remain live documents.

Will you put the risk assessment on the website?

Yes, we'll also share it with the professional associations and trade unions. We will also review them weekly and welcome ongoing comments and feedback. If you do have specific comments, please speak to your Headteacher or email Claire.swann@atlp.org.uk

Who is the 'competent person' in terms of H&S?

Michelle Doughty leads on H&S across the Trust working with her O&E team, headteachers, executive team and trustees.

Who is involved in the Risk Assessment Process?

All stakeholders have a voice through our sharing and feedback. We also share with all professional associations and trade unions for comment given the legal requirement to do so. It is signed off by trustees.

Will teachers be required to continue planning for home learning and classroom teaching at the same time?

Good question and we completely understand the concerns people may have about this. We're obviously focused on your mental health and workload - we haven't lost sight of that and will factor both elements of planning. If we're working on the basis of everyone in then there'll only be remote learning if we're instructed to lockdown so it should be one or the other method rather than both simultaneously.

What do we do if children miss lessons through self-isolation?

Our remote learning offer has been fantastic so we need to make sure it's available to those who are not able to attend. The guidance states "remote education, where needed, is high quality and aligns as closely as possible with in-school provision: schools and other settings continue to build their capability to educate pupils remotely, where this is needed"

The Trust is promoting the use of Oak National Academy, wherever possible to support in this area.

How can we touch student exercise books? How will we be able to mark work?

Government guidance now allows you to take books home to mark.

How can we give face to face if we are all 2m away? How will staff with poor eyesight manage to read students books from 2m?

This is going to require us to work very differently to how we might normally work in the classroom. Staff should be positioned 2m away from others in the room, whenever possible. The guidance acknowledges this is harder with younger children. If you are concerned about this, please speak to HR.

Are we expected to reduce the curriculum?

No. The guidance states "the curriculum remains broad and ambitious: all pupils continue to be taught a wide range of subjects, maintaining their choices for further study and employment" but we have to accept that some modification to what we deliver, and when, may be required. Some schools may consider it appropriate to suspend some subjects for some pupils in exceptional circumstances. If that's the case you should be able to show that this is in the best interests of these pupils and this should be subject to discussion with parents during the autumn term.

Where do I start in terms of teaching the curriculum?

This is a school-specific question but your headteacher and/or Head of Department/Subject /Phase Lead should have considered the "***prioritisation within subjects of the most important components for progression***" with a view to "***teaching time should be prioritised to address significant gaps in pupils' knowledge with the aim of returning to the school's normal curriculum content by no later than summer term 2021.***" Your planning should be informed by an assessment of pupils' starting points and addressing the gaps in their knowledge and skills.

What's happening with assessments and examinations next year?

Ofqual have opened their [consultation](#). We await further guidance.

What are you doing about children with SEND/EHCPs?

Communication and flexibility in approach is key when risk assessing for students with SEND and EHCPs. Effective communication, not only with families or carers, but also with all of you who work with these students. Many students with SEND may be able to return to school with their classmates. Where students require intimate care or will need to be frequently in close proximity to adults (less than 2 metres) school staff and parents/carers need to be clear that this is the case. Both parties should be in agreement about the student returning to school with the understanding that social distancing will, at times, be impossible. School staff should not be made to feel pressured about having to work with a student who requires close contact from an adult.

Each risk assessment should be made on a “case by case” basis as students with SEND / EHCPs will have differing needs and requirement for support. SENCOs should regularly review the arrangements agreed with staff to work in close proximity to students with SEND to ensure that colleagues continue to be feel confident to work in this way. Our SENCOs should be available to be contacted to offer guidance, even if they're not physically in the building, and to discuss individual SEND students with colleagues.

How do we teach music?

The guidance at the moment states *"Schools should note that there may be an additional risk of infection in environments where you or others are singing, chanting, playing wind or brass instruments or shouting. This applies even if individuals are at a distance. Schools should consider how to reduce the risk, particularly when pupils are playing instruments or singing in small groups such as in music lessons by, for example, physical distancing and playing outside wherever possible, positioning pupils back-to-back or side-to-side, avoiding sharing of instruments, and ensuring good ventilation. Singing, wind and brass playing should not take place in larger groups such as school choirs and ensembles, or school assemblies. Furthermore, detailed DfE guidance will be published shortly"* so we will wait for this guidance.

What should we do about clubs and breakfast clubs etc.?

This is a school-specific question but the guidance states that we *"should consider resuming any breakfast and after-school provision, where possible, from the start of the autumn term. We recognise that schools may need to respond flexibly and build this up over time. Such provision will help ensure pupils have opportunities to re-engage with their peers and with the school, ensure vulnerable children have a healthy breakfast and are ready to focus on their lessons, provide enrichment activities, and also support working parents."* That said, it could be logistically challenging particularly if the club offers cross-year group provision. We need time to make sure we can make this work alongside our protective measures.

Y12s are capable of independent study - why do they need to be in school?

This is a good question and is part of the debate about "What is education for?" If we accept that we are supporting children for the rest of their lives then it is not purely about academic but rather the ability to also socially interact (even in a socially distanced way) then by removing the opportunity to

physically interact in a safe way we lose one of the very things that makes us human.

There have been instances in other schools where students have purposely been coughing on others or contaminating areas - how would these students be dealt with? Will we sanction if rules/expectations aren't adhered too?

Such behaviour will be dealt with in line with our behaviour policies and expectations.

Can people from outside agencies still use school facilities? Are we allowed to bring them into the school?

We are strictly limiting any visitors to any of the buildings as per the guidance. Any such visit must be pre-arranged and must have a clearly specific purpose This is also true for parents.

What do we do when we have a distraught/upset student? Are they allowed to come into the office?

This is a good question and the answer doesn't ignore the fact that we, too, may well be distraught. We need to provide children with the opportunity to talk about the experience and we would envisage that a lot of the time they will spend in the building will be to seek reassurance from us. Equally we don't want children walking the corridors of any building but it will be for the individual sites to determine what arrangements are needed here.

How can we support students if we are having to be distant from them ?

Social distancing must be observed.

How are you conforming to the equalities act?

We've got a legal obligation to protect you, and others, from harm and we will continue to assess health and safety risks and consider how to meet equalities duties in the usual way. Following the steps in the guidance will mitigate the risks of coronavirus (COVID-19) to pupils and staff and help us to meet our legal duties to protect employees and others from harm.

Do we still need to continue with Safe and Well Check phone calls in September?

There may be still be children who are not in school in September. These might be children who have a serious medical condition or those in insolation due to a family member shielding, being unwell or suspected of having the virus. We will need to ensure these children are safe and well and so will follow DfE guidance in terms of our contact with them both to ensure they are well and also to support them with their learning. This role may be undertaken by a DSL, Form or Class Teacher or TA.

Are we expecting an increase in disclosures when we return?

There are still many children we have not seen since the beginning of lockdown.

For some of these their experience during lockdown will not have been ideal. We are expecting a rise in disclosures as these children return to the safe environment of school.

It is really important we encourage children to talk through their experiences and then follow our Safeguarding Policy and report any concerns that we have using our school systems. It is important we all know how to contact a DSL. We should create opportunities to support children during this difficult time and be aware of the challenges many of them will have faced.

What are the specific indicators of abuse I should be looking for?

It is worth reminding ourselves of the indicators of abuse as stated in our Safeguarding Policy.

Key indicators include a change in personality, demeanour or routine. A child who is now withdrawn or who becomes aggressive or confrontational. We need to be aware of children who are missing from school or children who appear troubled, distressed or anxious and children who have acquired new, older friends or who present with expensive items or gifts. As educators we know the children the best so need to be aware of any significant changes in how they present in school.

What are the specific types of abuse we are concerned about?

We have been told that there has been a huge increase in abuse within the family home due to the pressures of lockdown.

Children may have been victims themselves or may have witnessed this. Both can have a traumatic effect. These are often fuelled by alcohol or drugs.

These may also be linked to mental health concerns in both parents and children.

Children have often had unsupervised access to the internet and as such online abuse has been on the increase. This has included online grooming, sexting and sextortion leading to sexual exploitation. Alongside this, child criminal exploitation has seen an increase linked to an increased demand for drugs through the county lines network.

We must be sensitive to our children's mental health. We also know that a significant number of our children have suffered a bereavement due to the virus resulting in a change of family dynamic and financial pressures.

We are also told that lockdown has seen a rise in the number of cases of FGM.

What do I do if I am concerned about a colleague and their suitability to work with children?

The procedures remain the same and have not changed.

These are laid out in our Safeguarding Policy and you should report any concerns to your headteacher. It is important you do not discuss this with the colleague first.

If you are concerned about your headteacher, you should discuss this with your Chair of Governors and again not inform the headteacher.