**Coronavirus: Latest updates September 2021**

The DfE's updated *contingency framework for education and childcare settings* explains that schools should consider taking extra steps to manage the transmission of COVID-19 and seeking public health advice if the number of positive cases reaches a certain threshold.

**Some close contacts and household members of a positive case don't need to isolate**

If any of the following applies:

* They're fully vaccinated
* They're below the age of 18 years and 6 months (i.e. your pupils)
* 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
* They'll be advised by NHS Test and Trace to take a PCR test instead. See our updated respond to a suspected case flowcharts for the full picture
* Children under 5 years old identified as close contacts will only be advised to take a PCR test if the positive case is in their own household

**Primary school tests and assessments will return in 2021/22** without any adaptations, but the results won't be published in Key Stage 2 (KS2) performance tables in the 2021/22 academic year. However, the DfE will still produce the normal suite of KS2 accountability measures at school level and share these securely with primary schools, academy trusts, local authorities and Ofsted for school improvement purposes. This will be a transitional arrangement for the first year in which primary assessments return. The DfE intends to publish primary assessment data in performance tables again in the 2022/23 academic year. Until this point, KS2 performance data for the academic year 2018/19 will continue to be publicly available on Compare school and college performance. KS2 results from 2021/22 will also be used to calculate Progress 8 baselines for future institution-level progress measures.

**From 19 July (step 4): face coverings only expected and recommended when travelling to and from school**

The government doesn't expect or recommend that pupils, staff or visitors wear them in classrooms or communal areas

However, it does expect and recommend they wear them in enclosed and crowded spaces where they might come into contact with people they don't normally meet. This includes public transport and dedicated school transport

Face masks are also no longer legally required on public transport

**No more bubbles**

You're no longer required to keep pupils in bubbles. This applies to provision over summer (e.g. summer schools) and school in term-time from autumn 2021.

You can resume assemblies and no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

**Local outbreak measures**

The DfE updated its COVID-19 contingency framework with advice on what you need to have in place should restrictions be introduced in your area. This includes:

Reintroduction of asymptomatic testing sites (ATS) in secondary schools

Reintroduction of face coverings in communal areas and/or classrooms in secondary schools

Limiting residential visits, performances, open days and transition days

Limiting attendance to primary school pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2, as well as vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers

Limiting attendance to secondary school students in years 10, 11, 12 and 13, as well as vulnerable pupils and the children of key workers

**Attendance**

In-school attendance is mandatory for all pupils, except for those who are self-isolating (or, in some cases, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), where they are under paediatric or other specialist care and have been advised by their GP or clinician not to attend)

The DfE has published a list of optional category X and I sub-codes to record non-attendance related to coronavirus – see our article on how to record attendance during coronavirus for more detail

**Free school meals (FSM)**

Continue to provide FSM to all infant pupils and FSM-eligible pupils

If FSM-eligible pupils are self-isolating, you should provide them with 'good quality' lunch parcels at home

**Remote learning**

You need to provide remote learning for any pupils unable to attend due to self-isolation or shielding. The government expects every school to have a digital education platform, to provide between 3 and 5 hours of teaching per day (depending on pupil age), and for some of this to be via video lessons (either school-led or using other providers like Oak National Academy)

**It's a legal duty** (previously it was an 'expectation') to publish information about your remote learning provision on your website.

**Ofsted**

Ofsted will return to its programme of routine, graded inspections from September 2021.

**Assessment**

Statutory Key Stage 1 (KS1) and KS2 assessments planned for summer 2021 also didn't go ahead. Primary schools had the **option** to administer the multiplication tables check within the 3-week period from 7 June 2021

**Educational visits**

You can go ahead with domestic residential education visits

**Parent and child groups in early years settings**

These can operate as normal and there are no restrictions on attendance

There are no limits on the number of people who can sing indoors or outdoors, but you should be mindful of keeping yourself and others safe.

**Wraparound provision and extra-curricular activity**

From 12 April provision became available to all pupils, without restriction on the reasons for which they may attend

Wraparound childcare and other organised activities for children may take place in groups of any number