

21 September 2021

Covid-19 Advice from the Director of Public Health for Somerset

Dear Parent / Carer,

We have been advised by Public Health England (PHE) that there have been confirmed cases of COVID-19 within your child's contact group.

Please be reassured that for most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. Regardless of severity, for many parents and carers this remains a concerning time. This letter is to inform you of the confirmed cases and provide advice on how to support your child. We are constantly working with Public Health Specialists at both the County Council and PHE to monitor this situation and provide you with updates.

Secondary only

Following current guidance, the school continues to ensure confirmed cases of COVID-19 complete self-isolation at home.

To prevent avoidable spread in school, all pupils, households and staff are asked to do twice weekly Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing. Positive test results should be reported to the school (as previously) and be followed-up with a PCR test.

There is no disruption to your child's education, the school remains open and your child should continue to attend as normal.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 Somerset County Council's Public Health Team (SCCPH) and /or PHE have advised that we put in place additional control measures:

- As per this letter, provide 'warn and inform' information to identified group (e.g. class, year group or common activities group)
- Provide outbreak information to everyone within the setting
- Encourage pupils to undertake twice weekly LFD testing (staff and pupils of secondary age or above only) and provide advice on symptoms and self-isolation
- Consider moving more activities outdoors, including exercise, assemblies and classes
- Improve ventilation indoors (where this does not impact comfort). This may include the use of CO₂ devices to measure ventilation, if available.
- Enhanced cleaning, focusing on touch points and shared equipment
- Reinforcement of all hygiene measures
- Encourage vaccination uptake for eligible students and staff

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19

However mild the symptoms, please book a PCR test for the person with symptoms (even if they have already taken an LFD test). Symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A new, continuous cough, and/or
- A temperature, and/or
- A loss of, or change to, sense of taste and/or smell.

You can book a test here [Testing for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) or by calling 119.

If the test result is negative, your child can return to school once they are well and have been fever free for at least 24 hours (without the support of paracetamol or Calpol).

If the test result is positive, your child must self-isolate for 10 days (from when symptoms started, or from the date of the test). Members of your household who have been fully vaccinated (at least 14 days earlier) are medically exempt from vaccination or under the age of 18 years 6 months, instead of self-isolating, are now advised to take a free PCR test. They should continue to take precautions to protect others until the result is received. If the result is negative, they can resume normal activities. If the result is positive they must isolate for 10 days. This starts either from the test date, or onset of symptoms, whichever ever came first.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, or they are worsening you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://111.nhs.uk/> or by phoning 111. **For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness.**

Those who are [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) should minimise their contact with other people in the household during this period, regardless of whether others have symptoms or not.

Further information is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection

How to stop COVID-19 spreading

There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19.

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Bin used tissues immediately and wash your hands afterwards

- Ventilate indoor spaces as well as possible – let the fresh air in, even if for a short period a day
- Participate in twice weekly LFD testing following national guidelines (recommended for 11 years and over). We encourage you to log your results here: www.gov.uk/log-test-site-covid19-results

For further information, please visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

Yours sincerely



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