

Ormesby Village Infant & Junior Schools Federation

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Advice to All Parents and Carers – Inform and Support

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Please find the latest advice and guidance regarding COVID-19.

1. Living with COVID-19 and the way forward

The Government has set out its [next steps for living with COVID](#) and [the end of routine testing in schools, colleges and childcare settings](#).

We know that this will be concerning for some, however thanks to the success of the vaccination programme and access to antivirals, alongside natural immunity and increased scientific and public understanding about how to manage risk, the population now has much stronger protection against COVID-19 than at any other point in the pandemic enabling us to move to a less restrictive way of life and respond to COVID-19 in the same way as other respiratory viruses.

The level of infections within a setting will be influenced by the community picture and everything we have learnt through the pandemic will help us to [live safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#), having embedded these into our day to day professional and private lives. Please remember:

- If you are eligible, please take up the offer to [get vaccinated](#).
- Ensure good [ventilation](#) is in place.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day.
- Make use of face coverings where recommended (e.g. on school transport when respiratory virus rates are high).
- If you have [symptoms of a respiratory illness](#), and a high temperature (38.2 degrees or above), or do not feel well enough to attend your setting, stay at home and avoid contact with people until you are well enough to resume normal activities and no longer have a high temperature (and no longer need medication to reduce a temperature).
- [Children and young people \(aged 18 years and under\) who have mild symptoms of a respiratory infection](#) such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.

- Adults and children who have experienced diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for two days after symptoms have gone.
- If you do have access to tests and [test positive for COVID-19 and are an adult](#) you should stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 days after the day your test was taken (or longer if you are still poorly/have a temperature), which is when you are most infectious. Or for 3 days [for children and young people aged 18 and under](#) (or longer if you are still poorly/have a [high temperature](#)). More detail is available on [GOV.UK](#).

2. People who are close contacts of a positive case

If you are a contact of someone with COVID-19 but do not live with them or did not stay in their household overnight, you are at lower risk of becoming infected. There is guidance on protecting yourself and others in [living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19](#). There is no need to isolate.

Adults who are high risk close contacts should take steps to limit close contact with others during the period that they may be infectious before developing symptoms as outlined in the above guidance.

Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive COVID-19 test result should continue to attend as normal. There is no need to isolate.

3. Expectations relating to COVID-19 testing

Free testing for the general public ended on 1st April. The government has retained the ability to enable a rapid testing response should it be needed, such as the emergence of a new variant of concern.

Asymptomatic testing

LFD Asymptomatic test kits will no longer be freely available, and so for the majority of people there will not be an expectation to test. It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a healthcare professional.

Regular asymptomatic testing ceased in most mainstream settings in February and from 1 April is no longer recommended in any education or childcare settings, including in SEND, alternative provision and children's social care settings. Therefore, settings will no longer be able to order test kits.

Residential SEND settings may be advised by their local health protection team to re-introduce some time-limited asymptomatic testing. This would be an exceptional measure, for targeted groups of staff and pupils or students (secondary age or above) in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak.

The DfE and UKHSA have asked you please **do not** distribute any test kits to staff, pupils, or students unless advised by your local health protection team, local authority or director of public health. UKHSA will issue further communications in due course about how to manage any excess stock of test kits.

Symptomatic testing

PCR symptomatic test kits will no longer be freely available to all; these will chiefly be used in medical settings where a diagnosis is required to inform treatment.

People over 12 years old whose immune system means they are at higher risk of becoming seriously ill should have test kits ready for home use if they develop symptoms and if positive may be offered antibody and antiviral [treatments](#) by the NHS. If you are eligible but have not been sent test kits, please [order them via the GOV.UK website](#) or by dialling 119.

4. Other guidance changes

Most of the specific COVID-19 guidance for education and childcare settings was withdrawn from GOV.UK on Friday 1 April.

Education and childcare settings should consult UKHSA's updated ['health protection in schools and other childcare facilities' guidance](#) for advice on managing specific infectious diseases, **including COVID-19**.

In addition, settings should consult the [DfE's Emergency Planning and Response \(EPR\) guidance](#) to ensure their emergency plans cover the possibility of future public health incidents, including COVID-19.

All of these guidance documents are reflected in our new guidance available on the [Norfolk Schools page](#).

5. Vaccination

The in-school COVID-19 vaccination programme for 12 to 15 year olds ended on Friday 1 April. 12 to 15 year olds will still be able to access the vaccine outside of school, at a vaccination centre, pharmacy or walk-in centre.

Healthy 5 to 11 year olds will be offered the COVID-19 vaccine from the beginning of April. Vaccinations will take place outside of school, in vaccination centres, pharmacies, GP surgeries and walk-in centres. Parents of 5 to 11 year olds will receive a letter from the NHS with further information on the vaccine.

For 5 to 11 year old and 12 to 15 year old vaccinations, we, as schools, are being encouraged to signpost parents and carers to where they can [book COVID-19 vaccination appointments online](#), at a vaccination centre or pharmacy, or [find a walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site](#) without needing an appointment.

6. Contingency planning

The priority will remain for schools to deliver high-quality face-to-face education to all pupils. Remote education should only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort where in person attendance is not possible.

Thank you for your continued support as we continue to live with COVID-19.

Yours sincerely,

Bradley Young
Headteacher

