

## Public Health COVID-19 update for Education and Childcare Settings

31 March 2022

### Information on changes to national COVID-19 guidance on 1<sup>st</sup> April and how we are responding locally.

The changes to national guidance as part of the Government's 'Living with COVID' strategy (and what these changes mean for educational and childcare settings) are summarised in the blog here:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/03/30/living-with-covid-the-end-of-routine-testing-in-schools-colleges-and-childcare-settings/>

Key points from the blog, today's DfE briefing (and how we are responding to these changes locally) are explained below:

- **From Friday 1 April, the Government will no longer be recommending regular asymptomatic testing in SEND, Alternative Provision and Children Social Care Settings.** Residential SEND settings may be advised by their local health protection team at the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) 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 possible COVID-19 outbreak. These settings are scheduled to receive an automatic delivery of contingency supply test kits during the week commencing Monday 28 March.

Cumbria County Council is currently reviewing its local testing policy and available resources to assess ways in which we may be able to continue to offer testing to protect our most clinically at-risk populations.

The local Education Infection Prevention and Control (Education IPC) team at Cumbria County Council will continue to support all education and childcare settings in Cumbria with suspected and confirmed cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 throughout the next 12 months. We will also extend the advice and guidance given to cover other infectious diseases, such as Norovirus and Scarlet Fever. We will develop this approach over the coming weeks, but, in the meantime, if you have any concerns about respiratory illness in your setting please email: [EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk)

**From 1<sup>st</sup> April, if an individual from your setting has a positive COVID-19 test result, please continue to notify the Education IPC team via the online notification form**

If you don't have a link for the form, please email  
[EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk) )

- From 1 April, anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result will be advised to try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for five days, which is when they

are most infectious. **For children and young people aged 18 and under, the advice will be three days.**

More generally, if an adult or child has not tested, but has respiratory symptoms and a high temperature, they will be advised to stay at home until the high temperature has gone and they feel well enough to resume their normal activities.

The Education IPC team is developing letter templates for settings to communicate information to parents and carers regarding positive cases and individuals with symptoms of respiratory illness and a high temperature. These will be made available for the start of the summer term (20 April) and published on the County Council website.

- All settings will be expected to have in place baseline infection prevention and control measures that will help to manage the spread of infection:
  - Ensuring all eligible groups are enabled and supported to take up the offer of national vaccination programmes including COVID-19 and flu.  
**From April, healthy 5-11 year olds will also be offered the COVID-19 vaccine.** Vaccinations will take place outside of schools in vaccination centres, pharmacies, GPs and walk-in centres. Parents of 5-11 year olds will receive a letter from the NHS with further information. [Online bookings](#) for 5-11 year olds will open in April.
  - Ensuring occupied spaces are well-ventilated and let fresh air in.
  - Reinforcing good hygiene practices such as hand washing and cleaning.

Over the next 12 months, the Education IPC team will continue to support settings with queries and cases / outbreaks of suspected and confirmed COVID-19.

In addition, we will also be working with partners to launch work programmes that support educational and childcare settings to promote vaccine uptake, improve ventilation and encourage good hygiene practice.

If you have any queries, please email the Education IPC team:  
[EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk)