

Updated Government Covid Guidance

In case you are not aware of the recent changes the government announced during the summer here is a quick overview and what managing covid now looks like in school.

What are the changes to contact tracing from 19 July 2021?

- From 19 July, education and childcare settings (i.e. schools, colleges and nurseries) will no longer be asked to carry out routine contact tracing. From this point onwards, close contacts will be identified and contacted by NHS Test and Trace.
- Contacts within schools, colleges and nurseries will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case specifically identifies the individual as having close contact.
- Symptomatic individuals, and those who record a positive test, will still need to isolate in line with current guidance.

What are the changes to self-isolation from 16 August 2021?

- **From 16 August close contacts who are fully vaccinated or those under 18 will not need to self-isolate**
- **All close contacts will be advised to take a PCR test**
- **Individuals identified as close contacts will not need to self-isolate while they are awaiting the results of their test**
- If the PCR result is positive, the individual must self-isolate and NHS Test and Trace will work with them to identify any close contacts
- 18-year-olds will be treated in the same way as children and young people until 6 months after their 18th birthday, to allow them the opportunity to get fully vaccinated. At which point, they will be subject to the same rules as adults

What does this mean for schools and parents of children in school?

The changes to close contacts and nhs track and trace now taking responsibility for identifying close contacts for all people including children in school means that schools no longer have responsibility for managing covid cases and contacts. As social distancing and lockdown rules have been relaxed schools will no longer be required to work in bubbles. However we will still maintain a system of control, managing risks and ensuring regular hand washing, good hygiene and other measures continue to be in place.

What happens if a child or a family member of a child tests positive?

If a child tests positive they will have to isolate and stay at home for 10 days. If a family member tests positive then the rest of the family members will need to do a PCR test and isolate until the test results are back. If the PCR test is negative then the child can return to school. If the PCR test is positive the child will also need to isolate for 10 days.

This means a child (or double vaccinated adult) can be in school even if a family member has tested positive or they have been a close contact as long as they had had a negative PCR test result.

Please read this government leaflet for confirmation of this information

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1hKS3zGpiHRCBqQWUeL6V2L6tV8mnMnKO>