



1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for educational settings
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>)

1. Department
for Education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>)
2. Public Health
England (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>)

Guidance

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for educational settings

Updated 7 April 2020

Contents

What you need to know

Background

Symptoms

What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) whilst at an educational setting

Limiting the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in educational settings

Cleaning and Waste

Tools for use in childcare and educational settings



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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

What you need to know

- staff, young people and children should stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature to avoid spreading infection to others. Otherwise, those who are eligible or required to attend should attend education or work as normal
- if staff, young people or children become unwell on site with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature they must be sent home
- clean and disinfect regularly touched objects and surfaces more often than usual using standard cleaning products
- supervise young children to ensure they wash their hands for 20 seconds more often than usual with soap and water or hand sanitiser and catch coughs and sneezes in tissues
- posters and lesson plans on general hand hygiene can be found on the eBug website (<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>)

Background

This guidance will assist staff in addressing coronavirus (COVID-19) in educational settings. This includes childcare, early years, schools, further and higher education institutions.

This guidance will be updated in line with the changing situation.

Symptoms

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are a new, continuous cough or a high temperature (over 37.8 degrees).

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection.

Children are likely to become infected with coronavirus (COVID-19) at roughly the same rate as adults, but the infection is usually mild.

What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) whilst at an educational setting

If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education setting they must be sent home and advised to follow the staying at home guidance

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>).

If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door, depending on the age of the child and with appropriate adult supervision if required. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else.

In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell. Cleaning with normal household disinfectant after someone with symptoms has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. You can find guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>).

Limiting the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in educational settings

Educational settings can help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) by reminding everyone of the public health advice. You can use this promotional poster (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>).

Staff, children, pupils, students and families should be reminded to wash their hands for 20 seconds more frequently than normal.

Frequently clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that are touched regularly, using your standard cleaning products.

Cleaning and Waste

You can find guidance on cleaning and waste disposal (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>).

Tools for use in childcare and educational settings

There is a dedicated helpline number for education and children's social care related queries for anyone working in early years through to universities, plus parents. Please call 0800 046 8687 – 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday) or 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday) – for any specific question not covered on this page.

PHE has a suite of materials (<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/resources/campaigns/101/resources/5016>) that contains public health advice about how you can help stop the spread of viruses, like those that cause coronavirus (COVID-19), by practising good respiratory and hand hygiene. To access, download and share this information, you will need to register for an account which only takes a couple of minutes.

Use e-Bug (<https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools>) resources to teach pupils about hygiene.