

Tuesday 23 February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are well and were able to enjoy a break last week.

In his [statement to the House of Commons yesterday afternoon](#) outlining HM Government's step-by-step 'roadmap' to ease restrictions in England, the Prime Minister confirmed that all children in all schools in England will begin to return to school from Monday 8 March. We are thrilled to be able to welcome our students back and will ensure that they return safely, in continued line with the system of controls laid out by HM Government.

In a separate communication yesterday to all school leaders, the Secretary of State for Education confirmed that 'School attendance will [again] be mandatory for all pupils, [but] with secondary schools and colleges able to phase return over the week of 8 March to allow students to be offered testing on return.' We are in the process of reviewing our coronavirus response plan and associated risk assessment in line with the amended [guidance for schools](#) published by the Department for Education (DfE) yesterday, and have a tentative schedule for phasing students' return that we will share with you soon once we have ensured its feasibility. In the meantime, I summarise below for your information, the key points from the 'roadmap' and associated [guidance for schools](#):

- 1) Attendance is mandatory from 8 March, meaning that the [usual rules](#) on attendance will apply and students 'of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies.'
- 2) From the week beginning 8 March all secondary school students will be offered [asymptomatic coronavirus testing](#) on-site. Three tests will be offered, taken 3-5 days apart. Once students have been tested three times on-site at school, they will be provided with test kits for regular testing — i.e. twice a week — at home. Testing on-site initially is to ensure that students are 'supervised whilst swabbing to make sure they are doing it correctly' to support students' transition to testing at home. (Note that the results of home tests — whether void, positive or negative — must be reported to NHS Test and Trace either online or by telephone as per the instructions that will come with the home test kits, and results should also be shared with the school to support our contact tracing duties.)
  - Students 'should [only] return to face-to-face education following their first negative test result,' and as such, testing and return of students will be 'phased during the first week to manage the number of pupils passing through the test site at any one time.' Any student not undergoing testing will attend school in line with our phased return arrangements which, to reiterate, will be shared with you soon. Remote education will be provided for all students until they return to school in line with our phased return arrangements.

- The current provision for vulnerable children and children of critical workers will continue until respective year groups return to school as part of our phased return arrangements. In other words, any student in Y7 for example, currently attending our provision for vulnerable children and children of critical workers will continue to attend such until the day Y7 return to school as part of our phased return arrangements.
  - Given the changes to the asymptomatic testing programme and protocols that have occurred since I outlined the detail at the time in my letter of [9 January](#), and which I shared in my letter of [29 January](#), we are required to obtain your consent again. I will do this, and provide detail to inform your consent, in my next communication.
  - This asymptomatic onsite testing will take two weeks and I would respectfully ask for your patience as we work through any disruption that this may cause.
- 3) Schools must continue to adhere to the system of controls regarding prevention and response to any infection as were in place for the autumn term, as we outlined in our [coronavirus response plan](#) and associated [risk assessment](#) and revised and updated throughout the autumn. This means that all measures that were in place at the time we closed for Christmas in December will continue and remain in place unless the review of evidence scheduled by HM Government to occur at Easter advises any easing.
- In addition to existing measures, students and staff must wear face coverings in classrooms, unless exempt, and unless social distancing can be maintained (for example, a teacher when teaching from the front of a classroom more than 2m away from students). And again, this will be reviewed by HM Government at Easter.
- 4) Students, staff and other adults must continue to adhere to [isolation requirements](#) and not come into the school if they have one or more coronavirus symptoms, if a member of their household has coronavirus symptoms, if they are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area, or if they have had a positive test.
- 5) We must continue to identify contacts of confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the school community and these contacts will be required to isolate for the required minimum 10-day period from the last day of contact with the confirmed case.
- A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person developed symptoms (or from 2 days before the date of test if the person did not have symptoms) up to 10 days after, i.e., when they are infectious to others. Full source detail can be accessed [here](#), but in short, being in 'contact' with a person who has tested positive means:
    - ⇒ Living in the same household.
    - ⇒ Face-to-face contact within 1m.
    - ⇒ Contact within 1m without face-to-face contact for 1 minute or longer.
    - ⇒ Contact within 2m for more than 15 minutes in a day (either as a one-off, or in total).
    - ⇒ Travelling in the same vehicle.

- 6) As a result of Government updates published late last week, [clinically extremely vulnerable](#) (CEV) adults, children and young people have now been advised to shield until 31 March 2021, pending a further review mid-March. In addition, the Government have also now identified more people via the [COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment](#) 'who may be at increased risk of becoming seriously unwell from coronavirus' and have included such people in the CEV group. As such, people in this category have also been advised to shield until 31 March, and will have received [this letter](#).
- Students who have been confirmed as CEV are therefore advised 'to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice [and] not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally,' i.e., until 31 March at the earliest. (Any parent or carer of a child who has not received the letter but believes that there are good clinical reasons why they should be added to the Shielded Patient List, are advised to discuss their concerns with their GP or hospital clinician.)
  - We will contact families of students we are aware have previously been confirmed as CEV to confirm that they remain on the Shielded Patient List, but would also be grateful if parents and carers could inform us if their child has been subsequently identified as CEV via the [COVID-19 Population Risk Assessment](#). Please note that we will request from parents and carers a copy of the shielding letter sent to CEV children, to confirm that they are advised not to attend school whilst shielding guidance is in place.
  - We understand that there may be some anxiety from some parents and carers and students themselves about the return to school. This may include students who have themselves been shielding previously but have been advised they no longer need to, or students who live in a household where someone is clinically vulnerable or CEV. I outlined some of the actions we have taken and are taking in my [last letter](#), but if it is the case that you or your child are anxious about the return to school, I would urge you to please contact us to discuss your concerns.
- 7) Where students are not able to attend school because of 'clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.' Moreover, we will provide remote education to such students, i.e., those 'who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).' This includes CEV students who are shielding and students who are isolating.

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Thank you very much again for your continued support. I will write again soon with precise detail and more information regarding our phased return arrangements. Until then, if you require further information beyond that which I have summarised in this letter, or through the links provided, you may find [this DfE blog](#) regarding students' return to school from 8 March useful, and this joint [press release](#) from the DfE and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). In addition, [this DfE paper](#) summarises the evidence relevant to, and in support of, the government's decision to lift restrictions on education from 8 March.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further information.

As ever, keep safe, and keep looking after yourself and each other.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Brett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Derrick Brett (Principal).





# Important

Advice for schools

## CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN

**A CHILD WHO DEVELOPS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A POTENTIAL CORONAVIRUS CASE:**



### NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH

*This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if the child usually has a cough, it may be worse than usual)*



### FEVER (TEMPERATURE OF 37.8°C OR HIGHER)

*The child will also feel hot to touch on their chest or back*



### A LOSS OR CHANGE TO SENSE OF SMELL OR TASTE

*this means the child has noticed they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.*

**MOST CHILDREN WITH CORONAVIRUS HAVE AT LEAST ONE OF THESE SYMPTOMS.**



If a child is unwell with one or more of these specific symptoms they should be told not to come into school or sent home as soon as possible and advised to get a coronavirus test. **ONLY** those children with one or more of these symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test.



Children reporting other symptoms such as a headache, sore throat, runny or sniffly nose, earache, itchy eyes, lethargy or tiredness **WITHOUT** a fever should **NOT** be treated as potential coronavirus cases or advised to take a test.

If the national guidance on symptoms of coronavirus in children changes, updated information will be provided at a local level as soon as possible. This information about coronavirus symptoms in children can be shared with all school teaching and administration staff as well as parents and carers where necessary.

**For further guidance on coronavirus testing for schools, please read the letter from PHE and NHS Test and Trace to school and college leaders at: [bit.ly/phe-schools](https://bit.ly/phe-schools)**



# ENGLAND LOCKDOWN

# STAY AT HOME

**THE NEW VARIANT OF CORONAVIRUS IS SPREADING FAST.  
WE ALL NEED TO PLAY OUR PART TO STOP THE SPREAD.**

## ▶ LEAVING HOME

You must not leave, or be outside of your home or garden, except for a very limited set of exemptions e.g. to shop for basic necessities, exercise, go to work if you cannot do so from home, or to escape risk of harm.

## ▶ MEETING OTHERS

You cannot leave your home to meet socially with anyone, except with your household or support bubble (if eligible to form one). Stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household or support bubble.

## ▶ EXERCISE

You may exercise on your own, with your household or support bubble, or with one person from another household (when on your own). Stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household or support bubble.

## ▶ BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS

Hospitality closed aside from sales by takeaway (until 11pm), click-and-collect, drive-through or delivery. Alcohol cannot be purchased through takeaway or click-and-collect from hospitality venues.

## ▶ RETAIL

Essential shops can open. Non-essential retail must close and can only run click-and-collect and delivery.

## ▶ WORK AND BUSINESS

Everyone must work from home unless they are unable to do so.

## ▶ EDUCATION

Early years settings open. Primary and secondary schools and colleges move to remote provision except for vulnerable children and children of critical workers. Most university students to move to remote learning.

## ▶ LEISURE AND SPORTING FACILITIES

Closed, with limited exceptions.

## ▶ ACCOMMODATION

Closed, with limited exceptions.

## ▶ PERSONAL CARE

Closed.

## ▶ ENTERTAINMENT

Closed.

## ▶ OVERNIGHT STAYS

You must not stay overnight away from home. Limited exceptions apply e.g. to stay with your support bubble.

## ▶ WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

Funerals of up to 30 people permitted. Weddings up to 6 people permitted in exceptional circumstances. Wakes and other linked ceremonial events of up to 6 permitted.

## ▶ PLACES OF WORSHIP

Places of worship can remain open and communal worship is permitted, but you must not mix with those outside your household or support bubble.

## ▶ TRAVELLING

You must stay at home. If you do leave home for a very limited set of exemptions, you should stay local in the village, town, or part of the city where you live where possible. Do not travel abroad unless an exemption applies.

## ▶ CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE

Shielding reintroduced across England. You should not travel to work, school, college or university and should limit the time you spend outside the home. You should only go out for medical appointments, exercise or if it is essential.

## ▶ CARE HOME VISITS

Visits can take place with arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, or behind windows. Close-contact indoor visits are not allowed. No visits will be permitted in the event of an outbreak but end of life visits are permitted in all circumstances.