

16th July 2021
13:15

Dear Families,

Re: Changes to contact tracing in education and childcare settings from Monday 19th July 2021

As you will be undoubtedly aware, the Prime Minister announced on Monday 12th July 2021 that Step 4 of the Covid-19 Roadmap will go ahead on the 19th July 2021.

One of the key changes that will take place from Monday 19th July is that education and childcare settings will no longer be asked to conduct routine contact tracing. As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the person who has tested positive, or, in the case of children, the parents/carers of the child who has tested positive, to identify close contacts.

NHS Test and Trace already manage the contact tracing process for the rest of society – including children who have recorded a positive PCR test – and has expertise in supporting people to identify close contacts.

This letter sets out in more detail how that process will work and what you need to do if your child tests positive for Covid-19.

Self-isolating and taking a test

If your child has symptoms: Your child and members of the household should self-isolate, and you should inform us as soon as you can. You should immediately order/take them to a testing centre for a PCR (lab) test. If the result is negative, your child and other members of their household can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons). If the PCR result is positive, your child, other members of the household and close contacts identified by NHS Test and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the onset of symptoms.

If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow test (rapid 30 minute test): Your child and your household members should self-isolate. Please let us know as soon as possible. You should order/take your child for a confirmatory PCR (lab) test. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days and results are negative, your child and household will no longer need to isolate. If the PCR test is positive (or taken more than two days after the LFT (rapid) test, your child must continue to isolate along with other members of the household and close contacts identified by NHS Test and Trace. This is from the date of the positive LFT (rapid) test.

PCR tests can be booked online through the NHS Test and Trace website or by calling 119.

PCR test results will be recorded with NHS Test and Trace automatically, but you should also communicate the result to school using the Covid-19 email address (covid.bbs@taw.org.uk) during term time or summer provision.

Contact Tracing

If your child has a positive PCR (lab) test result: NHS Test and Trace will contact you, using the details you registered when ordering/arranging the PCR test. You and/or your child will be asked a series of specific questions designed to identify who your child has been in close contact with. Being in an education or childcare setting with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19 will not necessarily mean a person is identified as a close contact.

You will be asked to provide the contact details, if you know them, of any individuals – or their parents and carers – who have been identified as close contacts. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts and provide appropriate instructions or advice.

Self-isolation and/or testing of close contacts

At present, anyone identified as a close contact is legally required to self-isolate and must not attend their education or childcare setting (the only exception is if they are participating in a daily contact testing trial). Anyone identified as a non-household close contact by NHS Test and Trace must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of their most recent contact with that person. If they live in the same household, they must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of that person developing symptoms or, if that person is asymptomatic, the date of their test. NHS Test and Trace will notify you of the day on which the self-isolation period ends.

Close contacts are also advised to take a PCR test. If the test result is negative, they must still complete the full self-isolation period, as the test will not detect all positive cases. If the result is positive, they will need to self-isolate for a further 10 days – NHS Test and Trace will contact them to identify any close contacts.

From Monday 16th August 2021, if the close contact is under 18, they will not have to self-isolate (in line with the policy for fully vaccinated adults) but will be asked to take a PCR test immediately, other than for very young children identified as non-household contacts, and they will not need to self-isolate while awaiting the results of the test. If the PCR test is positive, they will be required to self-isolate for 10 days from the date of the test. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch to identify close contacts.

Face masks

As you will be aware, the requirement for staff and students to wear face coverings/masks in all indoor areas ceased on the 17th May 2021 although we extended this period for an extra two weeks as we had 5 cases of the Delta variant in school. The requirement of wearing face masks/coverings in wider society is also being ceased from Monday 19th July 2021. However, with the recent school closure due to the number of cases we had which made the school operationally unable to run, in line with the advice we received from Public Health England and the Local Health Protection Hub, we will **continue to wear face masks in all indoor areas (including classrooms) until school finishes on Tuesday 20th July 2021.**

I recognise how difficult the past 18 months or so have been and the sacrifices that all families and schools have had to make. This has been an enormously challenging time for everyone and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you have done.

Yours sincerely,



Krissi Carter
Principal



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