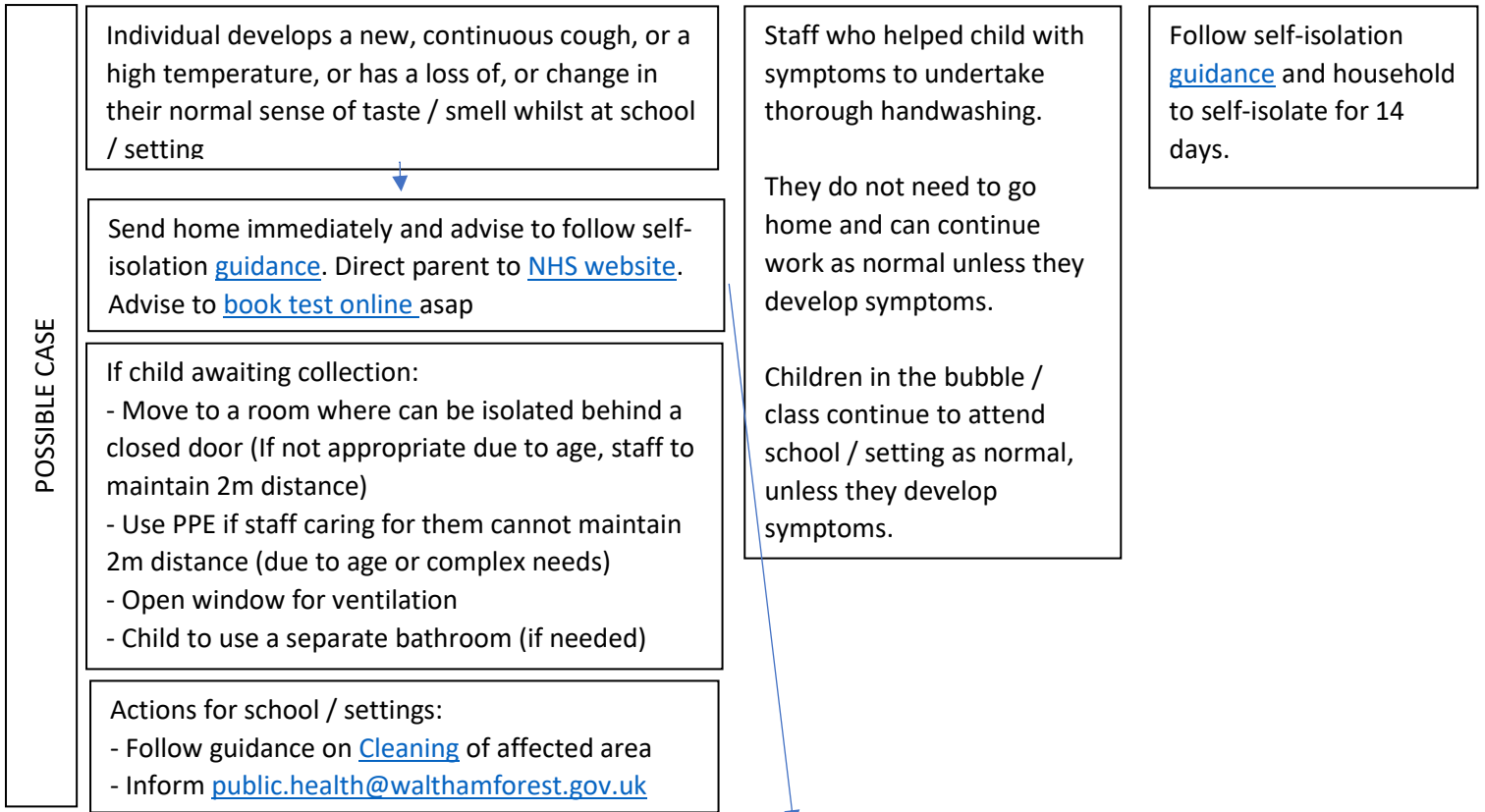


Guidance for schools / early years settings in event of possible or confirmed case of COVID-19

CHILD / STAFF

SCHOOL / SETTING

HOUSEHOLD



Individual with symptoms takes COVID-19 test (within first 5 days of symptoms)

CHILD/ STAFF

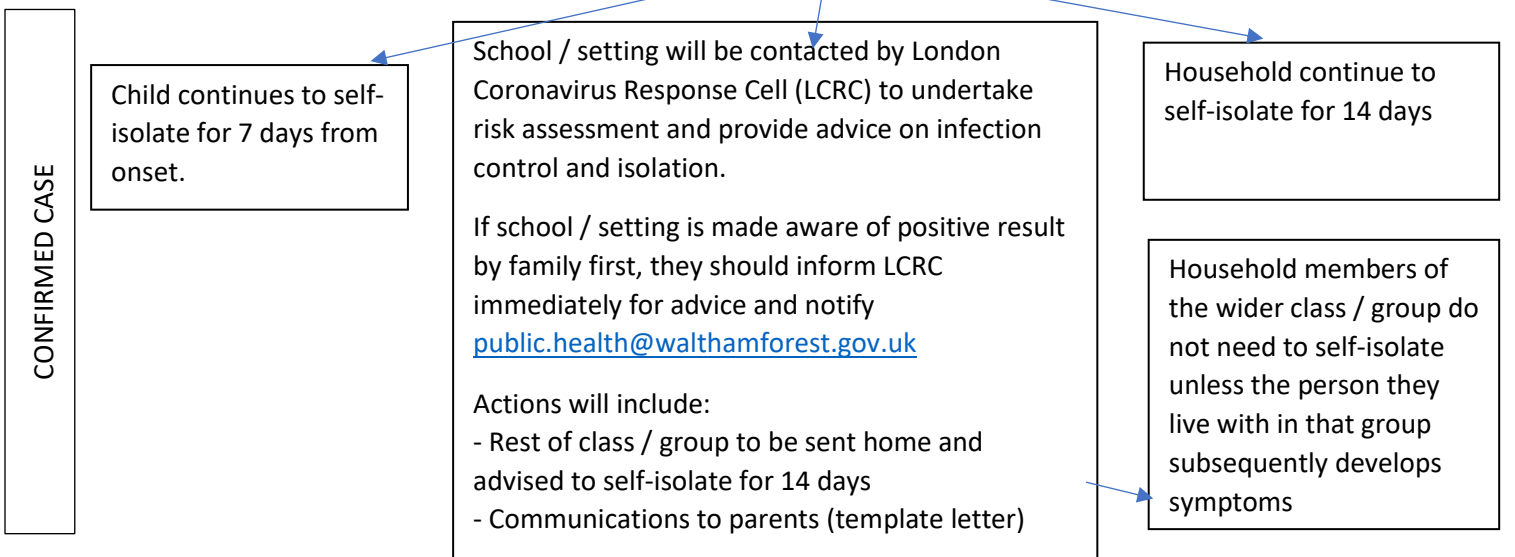
SCHOOL / SETTING

HOUSEHOLD

IF NEGATIVE



IF POSITIVE



In the event of a confirmed case or cluster of possible cases, please contact:
 The health protection team (London Coronavirus Response Centre) for advice – 0300 303 0450
To inform LB of Waltham Forest of any case (suspected or confirmed) email:
public.health@walthamforest.gov.uk

Frequently asked questions in relation to possible or confirmed cases

Q: What is the definition of a possible case vs a confirmed case of COVID-19?

A **possible** case of COVID-19 is someone who has developed symptoms any of the following symptoms and is awaiting a test result:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss or change to sense of taste or smell

Anyone who develops any of these symptoms should be advised to self-isolate at home and book a coronavirus test as soon as possible. In the majority of cases these symptoms do not turn out to be coronavirus.

A **confirmed** case of COVID-19 is someone who has received a positive test result for coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that they had coronavirus when the test was done.

In some cases, individuals may receive an 'equivocal' result – this means that the test was inconclusive and it is not possible to say for certain if the person had coronavirus when the test was done. The person should still be considered as a possible case, continue to self-isolate and should arrange for a repeat test.

Q: Who should we contact for advice about COVID-19?

London Coronavirus Response Centre (LCRC)

Please contact the LCRC immediately for advice on infection control and isolation in the event of a confirmed case or a cluster of possible cases of COVID-19. Call 0300 303 0450.

Department for Education coronavirus helpline

There is a dedicated government helpline number run by the Department for Education for education and children's social care COVID-19 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.

The DfE helpline can respond to all queries from schools relating to guidance for schools. Any queries relating to confirmed cases or possible outbreaks can be referred to local Health Protection Teams (the London Coronavirus Response Cell).

London Borough of Waltham Forest Single Point of Contact

Please email public.health@walthamforest.gov.uk to notify of any suspected or confirmed cases in your setting / school, or for advice on any local issues not related to published guidance.

Q: Is the action taken any different whether it is a staff member or child that becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19?

If a staff member becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 then the same principles apply as for children (set out in the flowchart). Staff members with symptoms should leave the school site immediately and self-isolate at home for 7 days, and any of their household members for 14 days.

The only difference is that staff should apply for testing as an essential worker as soon as possible to ensure that they get priority for testing - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-coronavirus-test-essential-workers>.

Q: What PPE should be worn in the event of suspected case in school / setting?

The majority of staff in education settings will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work, even if they are not always able to maintain a distance of 2 metres from others. PPE is only needed in a very small number of cases including:

- children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs should continue to receive their care in the same way.
- if a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in their setting and needs direct personal care until they can return home.

A fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then disposable gloves, a disposable apron and a fluid-resistant surgical face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn. The local authority has secured a supplier who can provide PPE and key cleaning equipment for schools and early years settings.

If you wish to order for your school or early years setting, please complete the [order form](#) and email to Kevin Murphy (Early Years) kevin.murphy@walthamforest.gov.uk or Bisi Oyekanmi (Schools) Bisi.Oyekanmi@walthamforest.gov.uk

Q: Does the school / setting need to be closed for a deep clean following a possible case?

In most situations the school does not need to close for a deep clean. However, from a logistical point of view it may be easier to undertake the recommended cleaning when the school is closed.

Depending on the cleaning staff available and the size / number of areas that require cleaning this may necessitate closing the school for a very short period of time.

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal. All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids and all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells. Full guidance for schools and early years settings on cleaning methods can be found [here](#).

Q: What if someone who has been in school / early years settings (either staff or child) develops symptoms whilst at home or over the weekend?

They should notify the school / setting immediately. They should begin their 7 day self-isolation from the time that they developed symptoms and access testing as soon as possible to determine if they are negative or positive for COVID-19.

People with coronavirus are considered to potentially be infectious for 48 hours before they develop symptoms. If the individual with symptoms has been at school / early years setting within the 48 hours prior to developing symptoms then the [cleaning guidance](#) should be followed. The infection risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) following contamination of the environment decreases over time. It is not yet clear at what point there is no risk. However, studies of other viruses in the same family suggest that, in most circumstances, the risk is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours.

Q: Should everyone in the class / bubble self-isolate if there is a possible case?

It is not necessary for children and staff members to self-isolate for 14 days following a possible case. Clearly children and especially young children and have frequent coughs and fevers and very rarely are they COVID-19. Isolating classes or bubbles on symptoms could therefore be frequent and disruptive and not related to COVID-19.

The possible case will be advised to arrange a test as soon as possible. In the unlikely scenario that they are positive for COVID19 then all parents / carers of children in that class / bubble will be contacted and given advice.

Q: Should we contact all of the parents of the class / bubble, if a child or teacher has to self-isolate with symptoms?

Early years settings and schools do not have to inform parents if a child or staff member who has attended the setting is self-isolating with symptoms. Fevers and coughs are common, especially in young children, and informing parents every time that there is a child with a temperature or a cough may lead to unnecessary anxiety as it is unlikely to be coronavirus. However, if as a school, you would prefer to inform parents, or in response to a parent asking the school, a letter template has been developed (see Appendix 1).

Q: If a parent or household member of a child gets symptoms, what actions should the school / early year setting take?

If you are made aware that a parent or household member has symptoms of COVID-19, then the rest of the household should isolate for 14 days. The household member with symptoms should arrange for a test as soon as possible. If they test negative, then their household contacts, including the child, can return to the school / setting. If they test positive, then they will continue to self-isolate for 14 days.

Q: Should the whole school / nursery be closed if we have a confirmed case?

A full risk assessment will be undertaken by London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC) in response to a confirmed case in a school or early years setting and they will provide infection control and isolation advice. The whole school / nursery will not usually need to close. All of the children and staff in the bubble / class will be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

Q: What should we do if there are multiple cases in a single setting?

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's London Coronavirus Response Cell (LCRC) will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take. In some cases a larger number of other children, young people may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole setting will not generally be necessary.

Q: What should we do if a child or staff member who attends a school / early years setting has to self-isolate as they are a household member of possible / confirmed case (not related to our setting / school)?

The individual who is a household contact of a possible or confirmed case should self-isolate for 14 days. The school can continue to operate as normal. If the person with symptoms has a test which

finds that they are negative for coronavirus, then the child or staff member can return to school / setting. If the test result is positive, then they must self-isolate for 14 days.

Q: If a person is identified as a contact of a confirmed case, via the NHS Track and Trace system, what should the school do?

The individual who is identified as a contact of a confirmed case should self-isolate for 14 days. The school can continue to operate as normal.

Q: Young children and babies who attend nursery settings, for example, frequently get spikes in temperature e.g. due to teething, should they be sent home to self-isolate?

Any child with a temperature, a new continuous cough or a change in their usual sense of taste or smell should be considered a possible case and collected as soon as possible and asked to self-isolate. Families should be encouraged to arrange a coronavirus test for the child as soon as possible. In the vast majority of cases the result will be negative, and the child can return to the setting and the family can stop self-isolation.

Q: Is testing available for children under 5 years?

Yes, children of all ages can now access testing for COVID-19, via the same route as everyone else <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> . This applies in England only. Children under 5 years old who have symptoms of coronavirus and live with an essential worker can access [priority testing through gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/priority-testing-through-gov-uk).

Links to national guidance

[Coronavirus: Guidance for educational settings](#)

[Implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings](#)

[Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#)

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Actions for education and childcare settings to prepare for wider opening from 1st June](#)

[Planning guide for early years and childcare settings](#)

Appendix 1: Letter template for parents / carers in the event of a suspected case

Dear parent / guardian,

A **child / staff member** in your child's **class / bubble** is isolating at home, in line with national guidance, because they have developed symptoms of either a fever, cough or change in their sense of taste or smell. The individual has been advised to arrange a test for coronavirus as soon as possible.

Children have frequent fevers, coughs and colds and will continue to do so, and very rarely are they coronavirus. Data has shown that at least 95% of coronavirus tests are negative. As the number of infections in the community decreases, the proportion of tests that are positive will also decrease over time.

As a precaution, the school / setting have been advised to undertake a thorough clean of the school, paying particular attention to the areas of the school where the individual has spent significant time.

Please continue to stay alert to the symptoms of coronavirus, which include a high temperature, a new persistent cough or a change or loss in sense of taste or smell. If your child develops these symptoms then they must self-isolate for 7 days and the rest of the household for 14 days as per [national guidance](#). You are advised to [arrange a test](#) for your child as soon as possible and to notify the **school / early years setting**. Please visit the NHS website for more information on [coronavirus in children](#).

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact **[add school / nursery details]**

Kind regards

Headteacher / Nursery manager name