

# Risk assessment December, 2021

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This risk assessment was drawn up so that Governors, Leadership and Staff could prepare for September 2021, in line with the guidance released with Step 4 of the national easing of measures. It should be read in conjunction with our **Outbreak Management Plan**, prepared in the event of an outbreak in the local area.

**It has been amended in recognition of the new measures of control required as a result of the emergence of the Omicron variant.**

This risk assessment continues to take into account the guidance provided through:

- [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#)
- [COVID-19: Actions for out-of-school settings](#)
- [Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed COVID-19 infection who do not live with the person](#)
- [Rapid asymptomatic COVID-19 testing in early years settings](#)
- [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the COVID-19 outbreak](#)
- [Guidance on COVID-19 measures for grassroots sports participants, providers and facility operators](#)
- [COVID-19 home test: step-by-step guide \(adults and children\)](#)

At the start of this school year, the DfE summarised the position thus:

“As the country moves to Step 4 of the roadmap, the government continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. This marks a new phase in the government’s response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone’s day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 becomes a **virus that we learn to live with**, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people’s education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September.

**Our priority is for you to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. The evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health.”**

The next page provides a summary of the changes in Step 4, with the updates to the new guidance in relation to the Omicron variant.

## Main adaptations to previous guidelines from December (as per the updated guidance above)

### Face Masks

- The government **now recommends** that pupils, staff or visitors wear them in communal areas (except where exempt)
- It also **recommends** they wear them on public transport and dedicated school transport (except where exempt)

### Bubbles

- Schools are **no longer required** to keep pupils in bubbles. This applies to provision over summer (e.g. summer schools) and school in term-time from autumn 2021.
- Schools can **resume assemblies** and **no longer need to make alternative arrangements** to avoid mixing at lunch. Students are required to wear face coverings in these circumstances, unless eating or drinking.

### Tracking and tracing

- Schools are **no longer be expected** to carry out contact tracing – close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace
- From 16 August 2021, children under the age of 18 years old **were no longer need to self-isolate** if they're contacted by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact of a positive COVID-19 case, unless they have symptoms. Instead, they'll be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test
- However, if the close contact is found to be the new **Omicron variant**, they will need to self-isolate for 10 days. This may require temporary isolation in school while the young person is being collected, or arranging to go home.
- There are instances where public health might advise schools to temporarily reintroduce some control measures (see below).

### Outbreak Management Plan

- Schools should only:
  - **Consider measures as a last resort**
  - Keep them to the minimum number of groups possible
  - Keep them for the shortest amount of time possible
- If there are several confirmed cases within 14 days, there may be an outbreak. The school will call the dedicated advice service who will escalate the issue to the local health protection team where necessary, and advise if you need to take any additional action, such as implementing elements of your outbreak management plan.

## Additional controls in the light of proposed adaptations

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
<p><b>Transmission risk from infected people in school (including close contacts)</b></p>	<p>In summary, anyone with COVID-19 <a href="#">symptoms</a> or a positive test result should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. This is because you could pass the infection on to others, even if you don't have symptoms.</p> <p>Everyone will be asked not to come into school if they need to self-isolate under <a href="#">current government guidance</a>. Regular reminders will be given about this (via parent communication, assembly and individually where necessary).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If pupils or staff have <b>travelled abroad</b>, they will be asked not to come into school and to quarantine under the <a href="#">current government guidance</a>.</li> <li>2. If a <b>symptomatic person comes into school or develops symptoms</b> while in school, they will be sent home immediately or isolated until they can be picked up. A designated room has been set aside to ensure that do not come into contact with other people.</li> </ol> <p>999 will be called if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk.</p> <p>In the case of a pupil who needs to be supervised before being picked up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A window will be opened in the room to allow for fresh air ventilation</li> <li>• If a distance of 2 metres can't be maintained, supervising staff will wear a fluid-resistant surgical mask</li> <li>• If contact is necessary, supervising staff will also wear disposable gloves and a disposable apron</li> <li>• If there's a risk of splashing to the eyes, such as from coughing, spitting or vomiting, supervising staff will also wear eye protection</li> </ul> <p>Supervising staff will wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after the pupil has been picked up.</p> <p>We will provide home testing kits to parents/carers collecting symptomatic children, and to staff who've developed symptoms at school, if they are unable to get a test elsewhere.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, if parents/carers cannot collect their child and they agree it's age-appropriate and safe to do so, the pupil can walk, cycle or scoot home. If the pupil cannot be collected or travel home independently, we will make alternative arrangements to transport the pupil home. In this case one of the following steps will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of a vehicle with a bulkhead or partition that separates the driver and passenger; or</li> <li>• The driver and passenger will maintain a distance of 2 metres from each other; or</li> </ul>

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The driver will use PPE (the same PPE as when supervising a symptomatic pupil, as explained above) and the passenger will wear a face mask if they are old enough and able to do so</li> </ul> <p>A deep clean will take place in the areas that the symptomatic person has been, and PPE will be disposed of properly, following <a href="#">decontamination guidance</a>.</p> <p><b>If you have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result after being tested because you had symptoms</b></p> <p>If your PCR test result is negative but you still have symptoms, you may have another virus such as a cold or flu. You should stay at home until you feel well. Seek medical attention if you are concerned about your symptoms.</p> <p>You can stop isolating as long as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>you are well</li> <li>no-one else in your household has symptoms or has tested positive for COVID-19</li> <li>you have not been advised to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace</li> </ul> <p>Anyone in your household who is isolating because of your symptoms can also stop isolating.</p> <p><b>3. Rapid testing programme:</b></p> <p>At the start of September every student had two on-site lateral flow tests to reduce the chance of transmission by identifying any potentially positive cases. Since then, they have been asked to carry out twice weekly lateral flow tests and record the results on the school and NHS database.</p> <p>We have provided staff and parents/pupils (as appropriate to the pupil's age) with a privacy notice, and parents/pupils (as appropriate to the pupil's age) with a consent form, so they can consent to testing.</p> <p>Effective uptake of the programme is monitored via registers, tracking spreadsheets and Microsoft forms. Where uptake is low, or needs improving, additional communication measures have been taken to improve uptake. Parents and carers are informed weekly of levels of infection in across the school community.</p> <p><b>If a child's assisted LFD test result is positive</b></p>

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	<p>If a child's LFD test was an assisted test, and the result is positive, you must self-isolate immediately. The child should also take a follow-up PCR test as soon as possible and within 2 days of the positive LFD test at the latest.</p> <p>The school will provide remote education to any students isolating as per the requirement from the Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>Schools do not need to see evidence of a negative test result in order to allow staff and pupils to attend school.</p> <p>4. If the school becomes aware that a pupil or a staff member has tested positive for coronavirus and needs advice on next steps, the school will contact the DfE helpline on <b>0800 046 8687</b> and select option 1. (If no advice is required, the school will report the case using the DfE's '<a href="#">online attendance form daily return</a>'). The advice service (or <a href="#">local health protection team</a>, if the call is escalated to them), will carry out a rapid risk assessment to confirm who's been in close contact with the person when infectious.</p> <p>In the event of an outbreak, the school will action its Outbreak Management Plan.</p> <p>5. The school will follow the guidance relating to the tracking and tracing of <b>close contacts</b> of confirmed cases of Covid-19, as outlined below:</p> <p>From September (<b>unless identified as the Omicron variant</b>), NHS guidance indicated that do not need to self-isolate if any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you're fully vaccinated – this means 14 days have passed since your final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine given by the NHS</li> <li>• you're under 18 years, 6 months old</li> <li>• you're taking part or have taken part in a COVID-19 vaccine trial</li> <li>• you're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons</li> </ul> <p>Even if you do not have symptoms, you should still:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• get a PCR test on GOV.UK to check if you have COVID-19</li> <li>• follow advice on how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19</li> <li>• consider limiting contact with people who are at higher risk from COVID-19</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/</a></p>

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	<p>In addition, the school will <b>risk assess any staff</b> who share a household with a Covid positive individual and take steps to minimise risk to others.</p> <p>All <b>close contacts of suspected or confirmed cases of the Omicron variant</b> of COVID-19 must self-isolate and book a PCR test, regardless of age or vaccination status.</p> <p>Where students are waiting to be collected due to being a close contact, with a confirmed or suspected case of the Omicron variant, the same control measures relating to isolation and cleaning will be used as outlined on page 3 above.</p> <p>NHS Test and Trace or local health protection teams will contact close contacts directly. Schools are not expected to undertake or assist with contact tracing unless there are exceptional circumstances.</p>
<p><b>Contact with coronavirus when getting to and from school</b></p>	<p>1. Journeys to and from school</p> <p>Everyone will be encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot into school, and asked to avoid taking public transport during peak times if possible. Anyone who needs to take public transport will be referred to <a href="#">government guidance</a>.</p> <p>For dedicated school transport (i.e. buses, minivans and any other services that are used only to carry pupils to school and where pupils do not mix with the general public), it is expected that staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow hygiene rules</li> <li>• Try to keep their distance from passengers where possible</li> <li>• Do not work if they or a member of their household are displaying coronavirus symptoms</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the school works with providers, pupils and parents/carers as appropriate to ensure that, wherever possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queuing and boarding is well organised</li> <li>• Pupils practise distancing within vehicles</li> <li>• <b>Children aged 11 and over use face coverings unless they are exempt from wearing them on public transport</b></li> <li>• Windows and ceiling vents are opened to maximise ventilation of fresh air from outside</li> </ul> <p>2. Face Coverings</p>

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
	<p>It is no longer a requirement to wear face coverings in lessons, although these may be reintroduced if the Outbreak Management Plan is invoked. <b>Face coverings are expected to be worn on public and dedicated school transport.</b></p>
<p><b>Spreading infection due to touch, sneezes and coughs</b></p>	<p><b>Hand hygiene</b></p> <p>Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. You should continue to ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.</p> <p><b>Respiratory hygiene</b></p> <p>The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important.</p> <p><b>Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)</b></p> <p>Most staff in schools will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. The guidance on the use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings provides more information on the use of PPE for COVID-19.</p> <p>To facilitate the guidance above, additional handwashing facilities are provided across the site.</p> <p>Everyone in school will be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequently wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry thoroughly using <a href="#">NHS guidelines</a>, or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser to cover all parts of their hands</li> <li>• Clean their hands on arrival, after breaks, if they change rooms, before and after eating, and after sneezing or coughing</li> <li>• Not to touch their mouth, eyes and nose</li> <li>• Use a tissue or elbow to cough or sneeze, and use bins for tissue waste</li> </ul> <p>Pupils will be encouraged to learn and practise these habits in lessons and by posters put up across the school.</p> <p>Help will be available for any pupils who have trouble cleaning their hands independently. Skin-friendly cleaning wipes can be used as an alternative. Young children will be supervised during hand washing.</p> <p>Supplies for soap, hand sanitiser and disposable paper towels and tissues will be topped up regularly and monitored to make sure they're not close to running out.</p> <p>Lidded bins for tissues, preferably operated by a foot pedal, will be emptied throughout the day.</p>

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
<p><b>Spreading infection through contact with coronavirus on surfaces</b></p>	<p>Schools should <b>put in place and maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule</b>. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment (for example, twice per day), with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.</p> <p>PHE has published guidance on the cleaning of non-healthcare settings which the school will follow:</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings</a></p> <p><b>Cleaning and disinfection</b> Regular cleaning plays a vital role in limiting the transmission of COVID-19.</p> <p>Reducing clutter and removing difficult to clean items can make cleaning easier. Increase the frequency of cleaning, using standard cleaning products such as detergents and bleach, paying attention to all surfaces but especially ones that are touched frequently, such as door handles, light switches, work surfaces, remote controls and electronic devices.</p> <p>As a minimum, <b>frequently touched surfaces</b> should be wiped down twice a day, and one of these should be at the beginning or the end of the working day. Cleaning should be more frequent depending on the number of people using the space, whether they are entering and exiting the setting and access to handwashing and hand-sanitising facilities. Cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is particularly important in bathrooms and communal kitchens.</p> <p>When cleaning surfaces, it is not necessary to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) or clothing over and above what would usually be used.</p> <p><b>Laundry</b> Items should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. There is no additional washing requirement above what would normally be carried out.</p> <p><b>Kitchens and communal canteens</b> It is very unlikely that COVID-19 is transmitted through food. However, as a matter of good hygiene practice, anyone handling food should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before doing so.</p>



HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
	<p>Crockery and eating utensils should not be shared. Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly.</p> <p>Food business operators should continue to follow the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) guidance on good hygiene practices in food preparation, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) processes, and preventative practices (pre-requisite programmes (PRPs)).</p> <p><b>Bathrooms</b></p> <p>Clean frequently touched surfaces regularly. Ensure suitable hand washing facilities are available including running water, liquid soap and paper towels or hand driers. Where cloth towels are used, these should be for individual use and laundered in accordance with washing instructions.</p> <p>Waste</p> <p>Waste does not need to be segregated unless an individual in the setting shows symptoms of or tests positive for COVID-19.</p> <p>Dispose of routine waste as normal, placing any used cloths or wipes in 'black bag' waste bins. You do not need to put them in an extra bag or store them for a time before throwing them away.</p> <p>Cleaning supplies will be topped up regularly and monitored to make sure they're not close to running out.</p>
<p><b>Spreading infection due to excessive contact and mixing between pupils and staff around and outside of the school</b></p>	<p>This is currently considered higher risk due to the emergence of the Omicron variant, according to Government guidance.</p> <p>The school will require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wearing of masks in communal areas</li> <li>• Individual risk assessments and deliberate placing of students to reduce individual risk (e.g. close to exit, or most ventilated part of room/space)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spreading infection due</b></p>	<p><b>Checks to the premises will be done to make sure the school is up to health and safety standards.</b></p>

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
<p><b>to the school environment</b></p>	<p>Fire, first aid and emergency procedures will be reviewed to make sure they can still be followed with limited staff and changes to how the school space is being used.</p> <p>This will include checking that all fire doors are operational at all times, and that the fire alarm system and emergency lights have been tested and are fully operational. Emergency fire drills will be carried out as normal with adjustments made to allow for social distancing.</p> <p>Areas in use will be well ventilated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using ventilation units - if possible, systems will be adjusted to full fresh air or, if not, then systems will operate as normal as long as they are within a single room and supplemented by an outdoor air supply. These systems will be maintained in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations</li> <li>• Opening windows</li> <li>• Propping open internal and external doors, where fire safety and safeguarding wouldn't be compromised</li> </ul> <p>A comfortable temperature will be maintained alongside increased ventilation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening high level windows in preference to low level to reduce draughts</li> <li>• Providing flexibility to allow additional, suitable indoor clothing</li> <li>• Increasing the level of ventilation while spaces are unoccupied (e.g. between classes, during break and lunch, when a room is unused). This means keeping windows slightly open while the room is occupied and opening more widely while unoccupied</li> <li>• Rearranging furniture where possible to avoid direct drafts</li> </ul> <p>Outdoor space will be used for exercise and breaks, and for education where possible.</p>
<p><b>Educational Visits</b></p>	<p>Educational visits have resumed from September and take into account any site-specific guidance and international restrictions or requirements.</p> <p><b>The emergence of the Omicron variant has affected the guidance from December.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools are required to consider whether to go ahead with planned international trips, in the light of new rules in response to the Omicron variant. This is because the need to self-isolate and test upon arrival back into the UK may cause disruption to education.</li> <li>• Risk assessments for all visits will include any public health advice, such as on hygiene and ventilation, as part of the risk assessments.</li> <li>• Before booking new visits, the school will ascertain the level of protection available from the visit provider or insurance provider.</li> <li>• For international trips, the school will refer to the latest government guidance on international travel before booking and travelling.</li> </ul>

HAZARD	CONTROL MEASURES FROM DECEMBER 2021
<b>Indoor and outdoor performances</b>	<p>Indoor and outdoor performances with an audience can go ahead, as long as the school adheres to <a href="#">this guidance</a>.</p> <p>Any poorly ventilated spaces will be identified, and steps taken to improve fresh air flow in these areas.</p>
<b>Spreading infection due to excessive contact and mixing in meetings</b>	<p>Consideration will be given to how and where meetings are conducted, taking into account individual risks.</p> <p>Measures taken may include the wearing of ensuring maximum ventilation in the widest spaces possible, use of masks, and separate spaces (e.g.video link during school INSET day).</p>
<b>Individuals vulnerable to serious infection coming into school</b>	<p>The school will follow all official guidance relating to CEV and CV people, including those entering the third trimester of pregnancy. Individual risk assessments, underwritten by medical guidance where available, will be carefully written to minimise risks to individuals. A distinction between actual and perceived risk will be explored as the school takes seriously the impact on mental health and anxiety that the fear of infection can generate.</p> <p>Pupils and staff previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) should follow the same COVID-19 precautions as all other pupils. However, if a pupil, or member of staff has been advised by their clinician to isolate or reduce social contact due to the nature of their medical condition or treatment (rather than the pandemic), they should continue to follow that advice.</p>