

Yewstock School - Dorset Council – COVID-19 School Risk Assessment: 13th January 2023

On Tuesday 29 March 2022, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, set out the next steps for living with COVID-19 in England. Most of the COVID-19 specific guidance for education and schools has now been withdrawn from GOV.UK.

Guidance that education and childcare settings should now refer to includes:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/fever-in-children/

www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities

www.gov.uk/guidance/people-with-symptoms-of-a-respiratory-infection-including-covid-19

www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-ventilation-of-indoor-spaces-to-stop-the-spread-of-coronavirus/

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-people-whose-immune-system-means-they-are-at-higher-risk

This risk assessment has been updated in the light of the Government's announcements on 'living with covid'. In summary:

- Covid becomes one of the many illnesses children or adults have.
- Regular asymptomatic LFD testing is no longer recommended in any education or childcare setting, including in SEND.
- Children and adults who are unwell should stay off school in the usual way, and return when they are well enough to do so.
- When children or adults are not sure whether to stay off or not, the DfE guidance is to be cautious about these decisions when the child or adult has a high temperature.
- If anyone does still have access to a covid test and tests positive, adults should try to stay at home for five days or until feeling well and children three days or until feeling well.

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

We understand that it is not possible to ensure a totally risk-free working environment in schools. However, the whole school risk assessment aims to put in place sensible and proportionate protective measures and controls to keep the school community safe. We will continue to follow all Governments guidelines.

Control measures

In summary, the following actions continue to be advised:

- adults who have access to a covid test and test positive should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for five days and until feeling well and children for three days and until feeling well.
- children and adults who are unwell should stay off school in the usual way, and return when they are well enough to do so.

The general measures to prevent covid being spread by:

- a) getting vaccinated
 - b) letting fresh air in if meeting indoors, or meeting outside
 - c) continuing to maximise ventilation in classrooms
 - d) staying at home if you are unwell
 - e) washing your hands and following advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'
- We encourage all staff and eligible pupils to take up the offer of vaccinations - we do not keep a record of those who have been vaccinated and do not discriminate on the basis of vaccine status.
 - Public health advice will be sought if there are significant concerns about increases in positive cases or if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with covid, and any recommended additional measures will be implemented.

- School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school.
- Travel and quarantine - Parents travelling abroad should avoid any travel that may be likely to involve reduced school attendance upon return. Staff travelling abroad during school holiday periods are required to be available for work at the start of the term.
- Remote education – the school is maintaining its capacity to deliver high-quality remote education in the event of school being disrupted; the school should consider providing remote education to pupils in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance. Scenarios might include:
 - occasions when school leaders decide that it is not possible for their setting to open safely, or that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government
 - occasions when individual pupils, for a limited duration, are unable to physically attend their school but are able to continue learning, for example pupils with an infectious illness, e.g. with a positive covid test

Stepping measures up and down

Yewstock School has an outbreak management plan outlining how we would operate if there were an outbreak in our school or local area.

Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any measures in school would only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of groups, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Attendance restrictions will only ever be considered as a last resort. Neither contacts or siblings of positive cases should under normal circumstances be asked to isolate.

Further precautionary measures will be considered where there is:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection.
- evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID19.
- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group