

Covid-19: Guidelines for schools 2023/24

Guidance on Covid-19 – 2023/24

Since March 2022, there have no longer been specific rules relating to Covid-19 in schools, colleges, childcare and other education settings.

Schools have been advised to treat Covid-19 like other respiratory infections such as flu and should still be encouraging their pupils to follow basic hygiene precautions.

The full guidance is available on the Department for Education website-

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/27/what-are-the-latest-rules-around-covid-19-in-schools-colleges-nurseries-and-other-education-settings/>

To help to refer to, here are some common questions and answers.

What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

- High Temperature
- Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Aching body
- Sore throat
- Blocked or runny nose
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Feeling sick or being sick
- New continuous cough

The symptoms of Covid-19 are similar to illnesses such as influenza and norovirus, and it can be hard to distinguish the differences between these.

Can a child go to school if they have Covid-19 or Covid-19 symptoms?

Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to go to school, college or childcare. However, those who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people where they can.

Does a child still need to be tested for Covid-19 if they show symptoms?

No, they don't. Free tests are now only offered to people at risk of developing serious illness from Covid-19. This applies to adults and children. It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for Covid-19 unless directed to by a health professional.

If a parent or carer tests positive for Covid-19, can the child go to school?

Yes, the child can and should. It is only the person who has Covid-19 who is advised to stay at home, not their children or other family members.

What measures are schools still taking to prevent the spread of Covid-19?

The best protection is vaccination and all eligible pupils are encouraged to take up vaccination programmes for Covid-19 and flu. Masks are no longer recommended in schools, but the following hygiene measures are still in place:

- encouraging basic hygiene measures such as regular hand washing and cleaning
- encouraging children to cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing
- ensuring that spaces are well-ventilated and that fresh air is let in regularly

Again, to remind you, this and other guidance is available on the Department for Education website-
<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/09/27/what-are-the-latest-rules-around-covid-19-in-schools-colleges-nurseries-and-other-education-settings/>

Any major change to the guidance from the Department for Education will be issued by the school to its community.

October 2023