

Public Health Department
222 Upper Street
London N1 1XR

T 020 7527 8326
E jonathan.osullivan@islington.gov.uk
W www.islington.gov.uk

Dear Parent / Carer

Changes to Covid-19 guidance for parents/carers (of children in Early Years and Schools)

Thank you for your help as we continue to respond to the challenges of Covid-19. As we begin a new school year and return from summer holidays, we are asking you to continue to help us keep children and families safe.

Many of the legal restrictions that the Government has imposed through the pandemic were lifted on 16 August. But it remains a priority that we keep the school and early years' communities safe.

School is the best place for children and young people to develop and learn and is crucial for their overall wellbeing and development. But please do not send your children back to nursery or school if:

- Your child has symptoms of coronavirus or has tested positive and has not yet completed their 10 day self-isolation period, and/or
- Your child should be in quarantine on return from travel abroad. The 10-day period is counted from the day after you leave a non-exempt country.

1. What is happening in schools and early years?

- Protective measures remain in place in all school and early years' settings, including practising good hygiene, ventilation, and regular Covid-19 testing to keep staff and pupils safe and minimise the risk of further disruption to children's education – this will be reviewed at the end of September 2021.
- Many restrictions, including class and year group 'bubbles' for under 18s, have been lifted.
- Social distancing is no longer necessary, and schools and early years do not need to stagger start and finish times, but they may continue with this if they wish.

- NHS Test and Trace will have responsibility for contact tracing and schools and nurseries are no longer required to identify close contacts.
- The legal requirement to self-isolate for contacts of a positive case has now ended for everyone aged under 18, and for adults who have been fully vaccinated. Instead, people will be informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a PCR test.
- Face coverings are no longer required for pupils, staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas. However, the Government “expects and recommends” that people wear face coverings, unless they are exempt, in crowded indoor settings, such as dedicated transport to school or college or when mixing with people you don’t normally meet. Face coverings must also be worn on the TfL network, including on transport and inside stations. Please do bear in mind that many older and vulnerable people have no choice but to use public transport, so please do the right thing and wear a face covering to protect others.
- We encourage parents to remain in the school/nursery playground to drop off and collect their children - this will be reviewed at the end of September 2021.
- If you do have to enter the building, parents/carers are encouraged to wear face coverings; especially in congested areas such as stairways/corridors and where there might be poor ventilation.
- Schools and early years will continue to have an outbreak management plan. The local Director of Public Health may advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures if there is an outbreak.
- We strongly advise everyone who is eligible to get vaccinated. Visit www.islington.gov.uk/covidvaccinations to find out where you can book or attend a free vaccination. You do not need to be registered with a GP or have an NHS number to get the vaccination, and no-one will ask about immigration status. The vaccine is now available for 16 and 17-year-olds as well as children aged 12 years and over with specific underlying health conditions or who live with someone with a suppressed immune system.

2. Lateral Flow Device Testing

Lateral Flow Device (LFD) Testing is for people who don’t have Covid-19 symptoms. LFD tests are free, quick and help to identify anyone who doesn’t know they have the virus.

Staff, parents and secondary school age children should continue to do regular LFD testing twice weekly.

If your child has a positive result from a lateral flow device (LFD) test, they should self-isolate – and you should inform their school, education or childcare setting. You should immediately order a PCR test to check the positive result.

If the PCR test is taken within two days and the result is negative, they can stop self-isolating (unless instructed to self-isolate for other reasons).

If the PCR test is positive (or is taken more than two days after the LFD), they must self-isolate until 10 days after the date of the LFD test. Other members of their household will also be strongly advised to do a PCR test.

3. What to do if your child or family member gets symptoms or tests positive

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19) are recent onset of a:

- new continuous cough and/or
- high temperature and/or
- a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell

For most people, coronavirus will be a mild illness. If anyone in your home has symptoms of Covid-19, they should get tested as soon as possible, and remain at home. If the test comes back negative, you can come out of self isolation. If the result is positive, then you need to continue to stay at home and self-isolate. The isolation period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days.

All other household members are advised to book a PCR test to make sure they do not have Covid-19. If you have been in contact with someone who tests positive you can book a free test through www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test . If they test positive, they should stay at home for 10 days.

Local authorities, Directors of Public Health and Public Health England protection teams can recommend extra measures for individual education and childcare settings as part of their outbreak management responsibilities. If this is the case, parents/carers will be told that Islington Council is implementing a local response to an outbreak.

Islington schools are a great place for your children to be and we look forward to welcoming them all back to the classroom in September. Once again, let us take this opportunity to thank you for all you are doing to help us get through this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan O'Sullivan
Director of Public Health

If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please telephone 020 7527 2000.