

CORONAVIRUS – UPDATED ADVICE

The government is monitoring Coronavirus and taking action at home and abroad. The risk to individuals remains low. The Department for Education has provided the following advice for schools.

1. Information about the virus

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. There is no evidence that children are more affected than other age groups – very few cases have been reported in children.

2. How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are 2 routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.

3. Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
 - before leaving home
 - on arrival at school
 - after using the toilet
 - after breaks and sporting activities
 - before food preparation
 - before eating any food, including snacks
 - before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment
- see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

4. Advice to those who have travelled recently

Travellers from Wuhan and Hubei Province

If you have travelled from Wuhan or Hubei Province to the UK in the last 14 days you should immediately:

- Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu. This includes avoiding attending an education setting or work until 14 days after they leave Hubei Province.

- Call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the area.

Please follow this advice even if you do not have symptoms of the virus.

Travellers from other parts of China and other specified areas

This advice applies to travellers who have returned to the UK from the following areas:

- Elsewhere in China.
- Thailand.
- Japan.
- Republic of Korea.
- Hong Kong.
- Taiwan.
- Singapore.
- Malaysia.
- Macau.

If you have returned to the UK from any of these areas in the last 14 days and develop symptoms of cough or fever or shortness of breath, you should immediately:

- Stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu. All other pupils or students and staff should continue to attend school or university, including their siblings attending the same or a different school (unless advised not to by public health officials).
- Call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country.

5. Latest information can be found at the following websites

Updates on Coronavirus can be found at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Travel advice for those travelling and living overseas:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Public Health England blog:

- <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>