Procedure for dealing with suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19

Introduction

The purpose of this procedure is to support the minimisation of the spread of COVID-19 infection within the school environment and surrounding communities.

The procedure has been developed using available government guidance and will be updated as new guidance is published to ensure practices are up to date in an evolving environment for managing the COVID-19 infection.

COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection

COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance

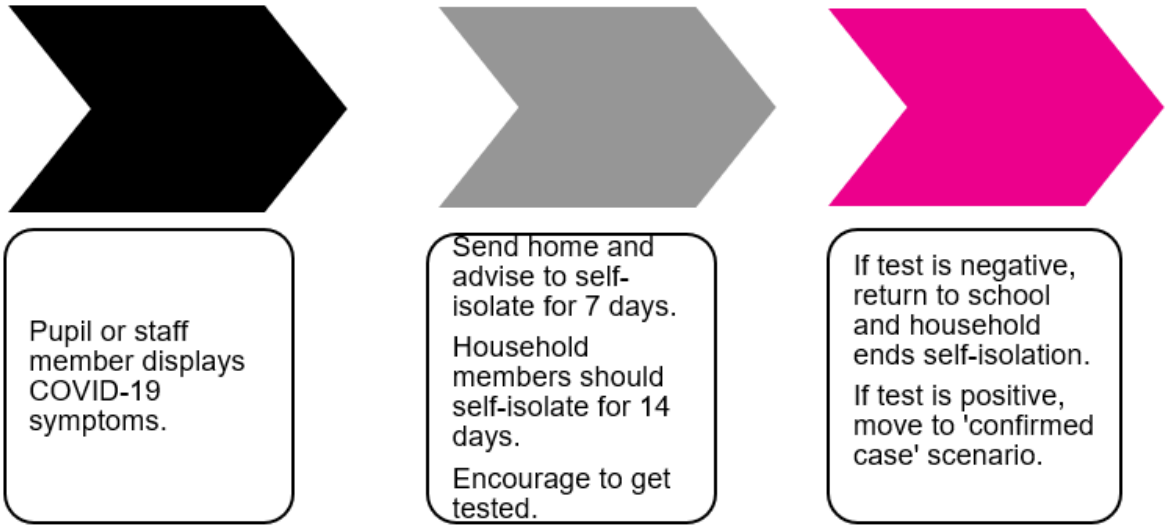
Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

Aims

This procedure aims to:

- Provide a management framework to support the school in managing suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 within its school and community.
- Provide assurance to pupils and staff, as well as their families and the wider community; that the school will manage suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19 in a responsible and effective manner.
- Minimise the spread of infection to protect pupils and staff, as well as their families and the wider community.

Dealing with staff and pupils who display COVID-19 symptoms within school



Managing a suspected case of COVID-19 on site

If anyone within school becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, or has a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they should be sent home and advised to follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

Members of staff displaying COVID-19 symptoms should be advised to make arrangements to go home immediately. If they are too unwell to travel alone, they should make arrangements to be collected from school.

In the case of a pupil displaying COVID-19 symptoms, contact should be made with the pupil's parents/carers and arrangements for travel/collection agreed.

If a pupil or member of staff is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door (depending on the age of a child and with appropriate staff supervision if required). Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, they should be moved to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.

If the pupil or member of staff needs to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be taken out of use until it has been thoroughly cleaned.

PPE should be worn by staff caring for a pupil or member of staff while they await collection if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained (such as caring for a very young pupil or a pupil with complex needs). A facemask should be worn if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained from a child who is symptomatic and awaiting collection and if contact is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a facemask should be worn. If a risk assessment

determines there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing or spitting, then eye protection should also be worn.

In an emergency, the school should call 999 if a pupil or member of staff is seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Schools should not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

If any member of staff has helped someone with symptoms, they should not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves or the ill pupil/member of staff subsequently tests positive for COVID-19 (see Dealing with confirmed COVID-19 cases below). They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

School cleaning staff should clean all affected areas after someone with symptoms has left the school estate, including bathrooms if used, to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. The areas should be cleaned in line with the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance. Any used PPE should be disposed of safely.

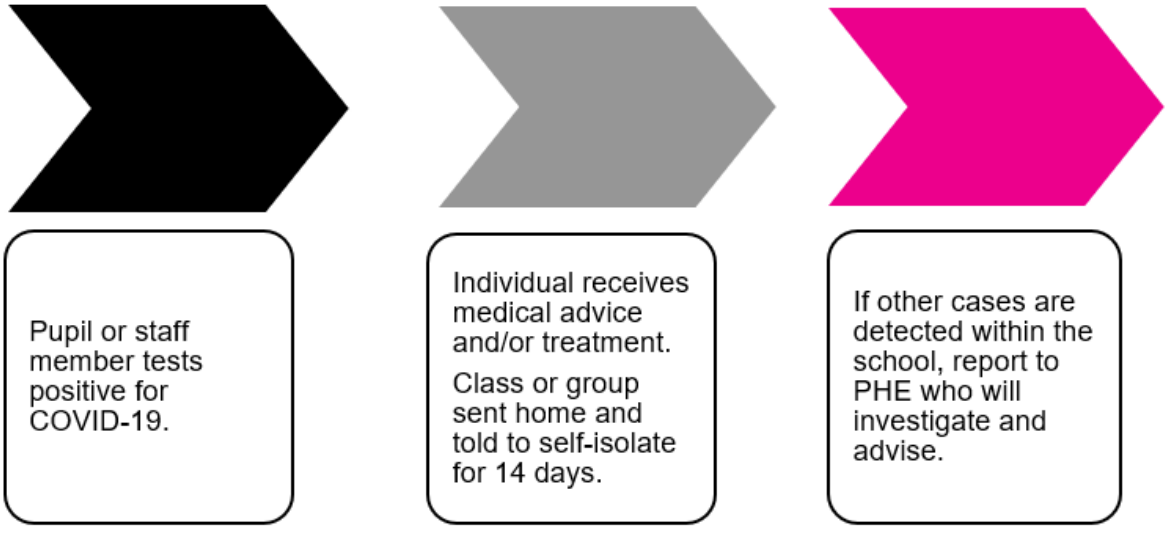
Testing

All pupils and staff displaying suspected COVID-19 symptoms should be encouraged to access testing via the online coronavirus service, note this is for those aged 5 or over. Parents will be able to call 111 if their child is aged under 5.

Access to testing is available to all essential workers and includes all education staff. Staff may book tests directly through the online service.

If a pupil or member of staff tests positive for COVID-19, the guidance 'Dealing with confirmed COVID-19 cases' should be followed.

Dealing with confirmed COVID-19 cases



Where a pupil or staff member tests negative for COVID-19, they can return to school and fellow household members can end their self-isolation.

Where a pupil or staff member tests positive, they should self-isolate at home and follow the COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection.

The rest of their class, group and others (also called the 'school social bubble') with whom they have had meaningful contact within their school setting should be sent home and advised to self-isolate for 14 days.

The other household members of that wider school social bubble do not need to self-isolate unless the pupil or staff member they live with in that group subsequently develops symptoms.

Note:

- The 'school social bubble' within a primary school setting will be the class teacher and the small group of pupils they are teaching plus any other individual with whom they have had meaningful contact.

As part of the national test and trace programme, if other cases are detected within the cohort or in the wider setting, Public Health England's local health protection teams will conduct a rapid investigation and will advise schools and other settings on the most appropriate action to take.

In some cases, a larger number of other pupils may be asked to self-isolate at home as a precautionary measure – perhaps the whole class, site or year group. Where settings are observing guidance on infection prevention and control, which will reduce risk of transmission, closure of the whole school will not generally be necessary.

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that the school has up to date contact details, as they will need to be contactable at all times whilst their child is at school.