

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Advice for parents or carers

This guidance will assist schools, childcare and other educational settings in providing advice for pupils, students, staff and parents or carers regarding:

1. Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
2. How to prevent the spread of disease
3. Cases and contacts in educational and childcare settings

1) Novel Coronavirus

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 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is between 2 and 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

What are the symptoms of Novel Coronavirus?

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) causes symptoms similar to other respiratory viruses such as the flu. These may include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- 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.

How serious is the coronavirus?

- it can cause flu-like symptoms, including fever, cough & difficulty breathing
- the infection is not serious for most people, including children
- there is currently no vaccine
- most people get better with enough rest, water to drink and medicine for pain

How can you be infected with Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Like the common cold, the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection usually occurs through close contact with a person who has the infection.

Close contact means being less than 2 metres away from a person with the virus for more than 15 minutes.

A person can also be infected by touching contaminated surfaces if they do not wash their hands.

What is the risk to the general public?

At the time of publishing, the risk to the general public is low, unless you have recently returned from a country or region listed on the Public Health Wales website, or have been in close contact with an individual with confirmed Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19).

For the latest information on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) please visit: phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus

2) How to prevent the spread of disease

How can I help prevent the spread of Novel Coronavirus?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus through good hygiene.

There are general principles you can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses such as Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). These include:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. 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
- If you feel unwell, stay at home and do not attend work, school or childcare/educational settings
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue then throw the tissue in the bin, and then wash your hands immediately
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment

How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?

If you need to cough or sneeze



**Catch it
with a tissue**



Bin it



Kill it
by washing your
hands with soap
and water or hand
sanitiser

You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser



**After breaks
& sports
activities**



**Before
cooking
& eating**



**SCHOOL
ETC.**
On arrival at
any childcare
or educational
setting



**After
using the
toilet**



**Before
leaving
home**



Try not to touch your
eyes, nose, and mouth
with unwashed hands



Do not share items
that come into contact
with your mouth such
as cups & bottles



If unwell do not
share items such
as bedding, dishes,
pencils & towels



Stop germs spreading by using the e-Bug resources on hand and respiratory hygiene
available through e-bug.eu

Use of Masks

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

What should you do if you feel unwell?

Keep away from others or stay at home to stop the infection spreading. Avoid public transport if you think you have symptoms of coronavirus. If you become unwell at a place of education, tell a member of staff and let them know if you have travelled to any other countries in the last 14 days.

If a staff member or parent are worried about their symptoms they should not go directly to their GP or other healthcare environment, they should Call 111 (all Wales coronavirus service) to find out what to do next. Information and advice on coronavirus is also available on the Public Health Wales website. Please check the information on the website before you decide whether you need to dial 111.

Staff, students, pupils and children who have returned from Wuhan and Hubei Province in China should self-isolate, and NOT attend education or childcare settings or work for 14 days. See phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus for further advice.

3) Cases and contacts in educational and childcare settings

There is someone in my child's school/childcare or education setting who has just returned from China or one of the other specified areas, what should I do?

If a confirmed case occurs in an educational setting the local Health Protection Team will provide you with advice and will work with the head teacher, principal and or management team of that setting. Outside those that are defined as close contacts, the rest of the school, childcare or education setting does not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities attending establishments or work as usual, unless they become unwell. If they become unwell they will be assessed as a suspected case depending on their symptoms.

This advice applies to teaching staff and children in the rest of the class who are not in a close friendship group or children undertaking small group work. The decision as to whether pupils, students and staff fall into this contact group or the closer contact group will be made between the Health Protection Team, the educational and childcare settings and (if they are old enough) the student.

Advice should be given as follows:

- If they become unwell with cough, fever or shortness of breath they will be asked to self-isolate and should seek medical advice from NHS 111.
- If they are unwell at any time within the 14 days of contact and they are tested and are positive for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) they will become a confirmed case and will be treated as such.

What to do if a case of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is suspected in your childcare or education setting. (Pupil, student or staff)?

If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in a childcare or educational setting, no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) are awaited. There is no need to close the setting or send other learners or staff home. As a precautionary measure, the NHS are currently testing a very large number of people who have travelled back from affected countries, the vast majority of whom test negative. Therefore, until the outcome of test results is known there is no action that staff members need to take apart from cleaning specific areas (see phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus for more information)

What to do if a case of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is confirmed in your childcare or education setting. (Pupil, student or staff)?

The childcare or educational setting will be contacted by the local Health Protection Team to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and

advise on any actions or precautions that should be taken. An assessment of each childcare or education setting will be undertaken by the Health Protection Team with relevant staff. Advice on the management of pupils or students and staff will be based on this assessment.

The Health Protection Team will also be in contact with the patient directly to advise on isolation and identifying other contacts, and will be in touch with any contacts of the patient to provide them with appropriate advice. Advice on cleaning of communal areas such as classrooms, changing rooms and toilets will be given by the Health Protection Team.

If there is a confirmed case, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the educational establishment with advice from the local Health Protection Team. In most cases, closure of the childcare or education setting will be unnecessary but this will be a local decision based on various factors such as establishment size and pupil mixing.

What to do if pupils, students or staff in your institution are contacts of a confirmed case of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) who was symptomatic while attending your childcare or educational setting?

The definition of a contact includes:

- any pupil, student or staff member in close face-to-face or touching contact including those undertaking small group work (within 2 metres of the case for more than 15 minutes)
- talking with or being coughed on for any length of time while the individual is symptomatic
- anyone who has cleaned up any bodily fluids of the individual
- close friendship groups
- any pupil, student or staff member living in the same household as a confirmed case, or equivalent setting such as boarding school dormitory or other student accommodation

Contacts are not considered cases and if they are well, they are very unlikely to have spread the infection to others, however:

- they will be asked to self-isolate at home, or within their boarding school dormitory room, for 14 days from the last time they had contact with the confirmed case and follow the home isolation advice sheet which can be found at phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus

Family and friends who have not had close contact (as listed above) with the original confirmed case do not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities such as attending childcare or educational settings or work, unless they become unwell.

For the most up to date information on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) please visit phw.nhs.wales/coronavirus