

Coronavirus: Information from the Department of Education



Preventing the spread of infection

People who have returned from **Hubei Province, including Wuhan**, in the last 14 days should self-isolate. This includes avoiding attending an education setting or work until 14 days after they leave Hubei Province.

People who have returned from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan or Thailand in the last 14 days, are advised to stay at home if they develop symptoms. 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).

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:

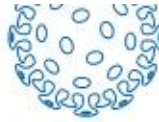
- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- people 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](#).

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.



Public Health
England



Advice on the coronavirus for places of education

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 likely are you to catch the virus?

- you can only catch it if you have been close to a person who has the virus
- the chance of being in contact with the virus is currently low in the UK
- if you have travelled to areas where many people are infected, your chance of catching the virus is higher, i.e. China and any affected areas

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 & water or
hand sanitiser

You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser



After breaks
& sport
activities



Before
cooking
& eating



On arrival at
any childcare
or educational
setting



After using
the toilet



Before
leaving
the house



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 with our e-Bug resources on hand and respiratory hygiene lesson plans for KS1, 2 and 3: campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools

What should you do if you feel unwell?

Keep away from others and 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 your staff member or parent thinks you have symptoms of coronavirus, they should call **NHS 111** for advice. Follow the UK Government advice for childcare or educational settings gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19. Parents can visit NHS.UK to find out more information. Teachers and support staff should follow the UK Government advice.

Staff, students and pupils who have returned from Wuhan and Hubei Province in China should self isolate, and NOT attend education or work for 14 days. See NHS.UK for advice on coronavirus.

If there is an emergency, call 999 immediately



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.

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.

Advice for pupils, students or staff who have returned from travel anywhere else in the world within the last 14 days

Currently there are minimal cases outside the risk areas listed above and therefore the likelihood of an individual coming into contact with a confirmed case is low.

There is no need to advise any of these pupils, student or staff to avoid normal activities or educational settings unless they have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If individuals are aware that they have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 they should contact NHS 111 for further advice. For the latest country specific information please visit [NaTHNaC Travel Pro](#).

What to do with post, packages or food sent from Wuhan or Hubei Province in China and other areas/countries specified as above within the last 14 days

There is no need to change how you handle post, packages or food received from the affected regions. The virus does not survive well for long periods outside the body and so it is highly unlikely that COVID-19 can be spread through post or packages. It is highly unlikely that COVID-19 can be spread through food.