



## Coronavirus (COVID -19) Guidance for Early Years Providers

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 COVID-19 rules and restrictions for most people and most settings were lifted in the UK. Please see [COVID-19 Response: Living with COVID-19](#) for the most up-to-date Government guidance

For early years settings there is no expectation to carry out testing of staff or carry out contact tracing of known cases. Some people with certain conditions can still access free testing. Please see [nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/testing](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/testing) for more information. For others who wish to test, home testing kits can be bought in most pharmacies.

Best practice standards to keep service users and the wider community safe from the spread of COVID-19 are still recommended. This includes encouraging people to stay at home if symptomatic, encouraging vaccination uptake and increasing controls if an outbreak is suspected.

### Key points for Early Years Providers:

Individuals can still reduce the risk of catching and passing on COVID-19 by:

- Getting vaccinated
- Washing your hands and following advice to “catch it, kill it, bin it” [catch-it-bin-it-kill-it-poster](#)
- Ventilation / letting fresh air in at regular intervals when in enclosed spaces
- Staying at home if you are unwell
- Taking a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms, (if LFT available) and staying at home if you test positive
- Wearing a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, when rates of transmission are high or there is an outbreak within your work setting

### Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

Children and young people usually have a mild illness and most get better in a few days.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- a high temperature or shivering (chills) – a high temperature means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- shortness of breath
- feeling tired or exhausted
- an aching body
- a headache
- a sore throat
- a blocked or runny nose
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea
- feeling sick or being sick

The symptoms are very similar to symptoms of other illnesses, such as colds and flu.

## Symptomatic staff and children in Early Years settings

Adults and children with symptoms of a respiratory illness should be recommended to stay at home until they are well and no longer have a temperature. National guidance recommends that children with only mild symptoms of a runny nose, sore throat, slight cough, who are otherwise well can still attend settings. When there is a known COVID-19 outbreak within the setting, having a lower threshold for individuals with milder symptoms may be considered.

Advice on other infectious diseases can be found here: [Health protection in childcare settings](#)

## Positive COVID-19 cases: local advice and recommendations

Individuals who do test positive for COVID-19 by LFT are **advised to stay at home for 5 full days (adults) and 3 full days (children)**. The day of the positive test is taken as day 0. Children and staff can return to the setting after this period of isolation if they feel well and no longer have a high temperature. They do not have to have a negative LFT to return to the setting.

## Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreaks in childcare settings

Early Years and Public Health colleagues are available to provide advice and support to settings / providers if needed. In the event you have rising case numbers or any concerns, please contact: Coventry's Health Protection Team [HPTeam@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:HPTeam@coventry.gov.uk)

In an outbreak situation, providers should aim to operate as normally as possible. Settings can choose to revise delivery models or increase COVID-19 security measures for a short period of time. See **checklist** at [www.coventry.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/provider-resources](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/provider-resources) for some actions that can be taken in response to rising case numbers.

Where there are high numbers of staff/children unwell with respiratory symptoms, but it is not clear if it is or isn't COVID-19, keeping parents informed and asking them to be vigilant for symptoms is recommended. **Template letters** are available at [www.coventry.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/provider-resources](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/early-years-childcare/provider-resources)

Please see [Emergency planning and response for education, childcare, and children's social care settings](#), which outlines how early years settings should operate in the event of a significant public health incident.

## Vulnerable individuals

There is no requirement for every employer to explicitly consider **COVID-19 in their risk assessments**. However, please ensure you are up to date with respect to risk assessments for individuals who are at higher risk of more serious complications from COVID-19, for example pregnant staff:

[People at higher risk from coronavirus \(Covid -19\)](#)

[COVID-19: guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk](#)

## Vaccination

It is recommended that all staff take up the offer of a vaccine. Vaccines are our best defense against COVID-19. Vaccination makes people less likely to catch the virus and less likely to pass it on. Please encourage vaccine take up among staff / parents and eligible children.