
Children and young people Covid-19 infection scenarios

Child or young person (aged 18 years and under) has symptoms of a respiratory infection, including Covid-19, and has not taken a Covid-19 test:

- Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend their education setting.
- Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can go back to school, college or childcare, and resume normal activities when they no longer have a high temperature and they are well enough to attend.
- All children and young people with respiratory symptoms should be encouraged to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when coughing and/or sneezing and to wash their hands after using or disposing of tissues.

Child or young person tests positive for Covid-19

It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for Covid-19 unless directed to by a health professional.

If a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test, if they can. After 3 days, if they feel well and do not have a high temperature, the risk of passing the infection on to others is much lower. This is because children and young people tend to be infectious to other people for less time than adults.

Children and young people who usually go to school, college or childcare and who live with someone who has a positive Covid-19 test result should continue to attend as normal.

Child or young person is a close contact of someone who has had a positive test result for Covid-19:

People who live in the same household as someone with Covid-19 are at the highest risk of becoming infected because they are most likely to have prolonged close contact. People who stayed overnight in the household of someone with Covid-19 while they were infectious are also at high risk.

If you are a household or overnight contact of someone who has had a positive Covid-19 test result it can take up to 10 days for your infection to develop. It is possible to pass on Covid-19 to others, even if you have no symptoms.

Children and young people can reduce the risk to other people by taking the following steps:

- Avoid contact with anyone you know who is at higher risk of becoming severely unwell if they are infected with Covid-19, especially those whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19, despite vaccination
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use hand sanitiser
- If you develop symptoms of a respiratory infection try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

If you are a contact of someone with Covid-19 but do not live with them or did not stay in their household overnight, you are at lower risk of becoming infected. There is guidance on protecting yourself and others in living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19

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