




STAFFING IN SCHOOLS – March 8th 2021 – ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE (to reflect DfE guidance issued in February 2021 - [Schools coronavirus \(COVID-19\) operational guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-coronavirus-covid-19-operational-guidance))

	CATEGORY	GUIDANCE	COMMENTS
1.	STAFF WHO ARE SYMPTOMATIC WITH COVID SYMPTOMS	<p>If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (fever>37.8 OR continuous cough OR loss of taste and / or smell), however mild:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform school that you have developed symptoms of COVID-19 • stay at home (self-isolate) and do not leave your house for 10 days from when your symptoms started • follow guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection • Get tested (access a test here) • Inform school of the test result <p>If you are still unwell after your 10 day self-isolation you should seek medical advice</p> <p>Please follow guidance on test and trace and managing a suspected or confirmed case in an education setting, see 5 below</p> <p>These staff should not be at school</p>	<p>Enter details of absence on iTrent system or your own HR system. When or if the member of staff feels well during this period then they can work from home.</p> <p>Testing is now available for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus. If the staff member is symptomatic it is vitally important that they get tested, in accordance with government guidance and advice, for their own safety, welfare and wellbeing and also that of others who they may have come into contact with.</p> <p>The following groups of people can access priority testing through GOV.UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • essential workers in England • anyone in England who has symptoms of coronavirus and lives with an essential worker <p>Guidance on testing is available here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested</p> <p>If staff member tests positive, follow guidance for category 3 (below). If staff member tests negative they should follow the relevant guidance on this flow chart with regards to returning to work</p> <p></p> <p>Flowchart - if there is a suspected or confirmed case</p> <p>For staff who have self-isolated due to either they or someone in their household displaying symptoms of</p>

			<p>Covid you do not need to continue to self-isolate if the test is negative, as long as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • everyone you live with who has symptoms tests negative • everyone in your support bubble who has symptoms tests negative • you were not told to self-isolate for 10 days by NHS Test and Trace (or by the school) – if you were, see what to do if you've been told you've been in contact with someone who has coronavirus • you feel well – if you feel unwell, stay at home until you're feeling better and no fever for 48 hours • If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped. <p>If you or others in your household have covid symptoms but cannot access testing, you must complete the self isolation period.</p> <p>All staff should be aware of the asymptomatic testing programme for schools and further information can be found on this link Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance Ealing Grid for Learning (egfl.org.uk)</p>
2.	STAFF WHO HAVE A MEMBER OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD WHO IS SYMPTOMATIC WITH COVID SYMPTOMS	<p>If a member of your household has symptoms of COVID-19 (fever>37.8 OR continuous cough OR loss of taste and / or smell), however mild, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stay at home (self-isolate) and not leave your house for 10 days from the date when the household member first had symptoms • Follow guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection • Ensure your household member gets tested • Inform the school and get tested if you develop symptoms yourself <p>Please follow guidance as necessary on test and trace and managing a suspected or confirmed case in an education setting, see 5 below</p>	<p>Enter details of absence on iTrent system or your own HR system. These staff can be asked to work from home.</p> <p>If the staff member develops symptoms themselves, they should follow guidance for category 1 (above).</p> <p>If the staff member or a member of their household (including children) is symptomatic it is vitally important that they get tested, in accordance with government guidance and advice, for their own</p>

	<p>Testing is now available for anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus.</p> <p>The following groups of people can access priority testing through GOV.UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• essential workers in England• anyone in England who has symptoms of coronavirus and lives with an essential worker <p>Guidance on testing is available here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested</p> <p>If you or others in your household have covid symptoms but cannot access testing, you must complete the self isolation period.</p> <p>These staff should not be at school.</p>	<p>safety, welfare and wellbeing and also that of others who they may have come into contact with.</p> <p>If the household member tests negative please follow the relevant guidance (and refer to links for  Flowchart - if there is a suspected or confirmed case)</p> <p>If the household member tests positive, the staff member should follow guidance for category 4 (below). Please follow the guidance on the link below https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance</p> <p>For Staff who have self-isolated due to either they or someone in their household displaying symptoms of Covid, you do not need to continue to self-isolate if the test is negative, as long as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• everyone you live with who has symptoms tests negative• everyone in your support bubble who has symptoms tests negative• you were not told to self-isolate for 10 days by NHS Test and Trace (or by the school) – if you were, see what to do if you've been told you've been in contact with someone who has coronavirus• you feel well – if you feel unwell, stay at home until you're feeling better and no fever for 48 hours• If you have diarrhoea or you're being sick, stay at home until 48 hours after they've stopped.
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3.	STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID 19	<p>Follow Medical Advice, inform the school, and refer to the guidance below</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection</p> <p>Please follow guidance on test and trace and managing a suspected or confirmed case in an education setting, see 5 below</p> <p>See also this flowchart if the member of staff was in school during the infectious period</p> <div> </div> <p>Flowchart - if there is a suspected or confirmed case</p> <p>Enter details of absence on ITrent system or your own HR system</p> <p>These staff should not be at school</p>	<p>School to follow guidance in the flowchart shown in the adjoining column (what to do if there is a suspected or confirmed case) and to refer to the LCRC resource pack for schools available on this link Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance Ealing Grid for Learning (egfl.org.uk)</p> <p>Inform Raj Chowdhury (ChowdhuryR@ealing.gov.uk or 07568 130165) or Steve Dunham (DunhamS@ealing.gov.uk or 07940 546 263) and the Council's public health team (publichealth@ealing.gov.uk).</p>
4.	STAFF WHO HAVE MEMBERS OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD WHO HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH COVID 19	<p>Stay at home (self-isolate) and not leave your house for 10 days from the date when the household member first had symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection Inform the school and get tested if you develop symptoms yourself or if you are asked to do so as part of a wider testing scheme <p>Please follow guidance on test and trace and managing a suspected or confirmed case in an education setting, see 5 below</p> <p>These staff should not be at school</p>	<p>Enter details of absence on ITrent system or your own HR system</p> <p>These staff can be asked to work from home</p> <p>In addition please follow the guidance on the link below https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance</p>

5.	STAFF WHO HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SELF ISOLATE THROUGH THE TEST AND TRACE PROCESS (If they are a 'close contact' of a confirmed case of coronavirus)	<p>Staff who have been contacted by the NHS test and trace service should follow any guidance given to them by the test and trace service</p> <p>Stay at home (self-isolate) and do not leave your house for 10 days from the date when the household member first had symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed coronavirus • Inform the school and get tested if you develop symptoms yourself <p>Link to Gov UK test and trace guidance https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works</p> <p>These staff should not be at school</p>	<p>For reference please see flowchart on dealing with a suspected or confirmed case of Covid 19 in school</p> <p></p> <p>Flowchart - if there is a suspected or confirmed case</p> <p>A 'contact' is defined as a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 • a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ being coughed on ○ having a face-to-face conversation within one metre ○ having skin-to-skin physical contact, or ○ contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact • a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes • a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
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6.	STAFF WHO ARE IDENTIFIED AS BEING IN THE CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE (CEV) & SHIELDED GROUP	<p>CEV staff have been shielding during the national lockdown that took effect from 5th Jan 2021 and were advised not to attend the workplace.</p> <p>The shielding period for the CEV has been extended until 31st March 2021.</p> <p>Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals are those identified through a letter from the NHS or a specialist doctor as in the group deemed clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV or shielding list). Staff who are identified as clinically extremely vulnerable should follow the published guidance.</p> <p>Staff should be supported to work from home and where this is not possible they should not attend work. Schools should continue to pay clinically extremely vulnerable staff on their usual terms.</p> <p>These staff should not be at school.</p>	<p>The shielded patient list (SPL) has been extended to account for people who have been identified aged 16-69 with multiple risk factors that make them more vulnerable to Covid-19. The NHS have confirmed that using a new Covid 19 risk assessment process that combines a number of factors including age, gender, ethnicity, BMI and specific health conditions and treatments, they will identify if an individual is likely to become seriously unwell if they were to catch Covid-19</p> <p>This increase in the numbers who are being advised to shield is likely to have an impact for some schools in planning for full reopening on 8 March.</p> <p>Shielding advice applies to CEV staff who have been vaccinated, even if they have had both doses of the vaccine, until further notice as the impact of vaccination among all groups is still being assessed.</p> <p>The latest guidance issued for the CEV group is shown on this link. This link provides a list of those who would be classified as CEV and confirms how those who are CEV can access support.</p> <p>Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>If an employee thinks that there are good clinical reasons why they should be added to the Shielded Patient List, they should discuss their concerns with their GP or hospital clinician.</p>
7.	STAFF WHO HAVE A MEMBER OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD WHO ARE IDENTIFIED AS BEING	<p>The latest Govt guidance is that these staff can attend the workplace, if they cannot work from home, but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the workplace and home settings</p> <p>Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	<p>These staff may be very anxious about the possibility of transmitting the virus if they attend the workplace and a sensitive and confidential discussion with them to understand their concerns and anxieties would be beneficial. These staff may feel that an individual risk assessment would be supportive and reassuring in allaying any concerns they have about continuing in the workplace.</p>

	ON THE CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE & SHIELDED GROUP		If they remain extremely anxious about attending work, they should be advised to seek medical advice
8.	STAFF WHO ARE IDENTIFIED AS BEING IN THE CLINICALLY VULNERABLE (CV) GROUP	<p>CV staff can continue to attend school. While in school they must follow the system of controls that are in place to minimise the risks of transmission. These controls can be found in this document (Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)).</p> <p>In particular note the sections under the heading of prevention including minimising contact across the site and social distancing wherever possible, face coverings in recommended circumstances, thorough hand and respiratory hygiene and promotion of and engagement in testing.</p> <p>Staff who live with those who are CV can attend the workplace but should ensure they maintain good prevention practice in the workplace and at home.</p> <p>See below specific guidance for staff who are pregnant.</p>	<p>Some CV staff may have been working from home during the national lockdown and a confidential and sensitive discussion may need to be held with them to ascertain any concerns and views they may have about returning to the workplace. They may want to consult their own GP or clinician.</p> <p>If they do attend work, then it should only be after an individual risk assessment has been conducted which identifies how they will be safeguarded on any return to the workplace.</p> <p>Consider implementing additional control measures if vulnerable staff are on site. referencing the individual risk assessment (e.g. social distancing, minimising contact with others, good hand and respiratory hygiene and face masks)</p>
9.	STAFF WHO HAVE A MEMBER OF THEIR HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFIED AS BEING IN THE CLINICALLY VULNERABLE GROUP	<p>The latest DfE guidance is that these staff can attend the workplace</p> <p>Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	<p>These staff may still be very anxious and a sensitive and confidential discussion with them to understand their concerns and anxieties would be beneficial. These staff may feel that an individual risk assessment would be supportive in allaying any concerns they have about continuing in the workplace.</p>

10.	STAFF WHO ARE PREGNANT	<p>Pregnant staff and their employers should follow the advice in the Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for pregnant employees</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-pregnant-employees</p> <p>This document provides advice for women under two sections – up to 28 weeks pregnant and no underlying medical conditions or 28 weeks plus pregnant or an underlying medical condition. Please provide a copy of or access to this document for pregnant employees.</p> <p>Pregnant women are in the ‘clinically vulnerable’ category, and are generally advised to follow the above advice, which applies to all staff in schools. All pregnant women should take particular care to practise frequent thorough hand washing, and cleaning of frequently touched areas in their home or workspace, and follow the measures set out in the system of controls section of this guidance to minimise the risks of transmission.</p> <p>In some cases, pregnant women may also have other health conditions that mean they are considered CEV, where the advice for clinically extremely vulnerable staff will apply</p> <p>For advice on vaccination for those pregnant or breastfeeding please see information on this link COVID-19 vaccination: a guide for women of childbearing age, pregnant or breastfeeding - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Employers should conduct a risk assessment for pregnant women in line with the model on the EgFL - https://www.egfl.org.uk/facilities/health-and-safety/new-expectant-mothers</p> <p>As well as the standard risk assessment for pregnant staff (which may have already been completed by the school), you will need to undertake an individual staff covid risk assessment . Effectively we would expect then to see two risk assessments for pregnant staff, details as per the comments column.</p> <p>Schools should also take action to review risk assessments where they are notified that a woman is breastfeeding or has given birth within the last 6 months as per page 32 on this link https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/950510/School_national_restrictions_guidance.pdf</p>	<p>The Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (RCOG) has published occupational health advice for employers and pregnant women. This document includes advice for women from 28 weeks gestation or with underlying health conditions who may be at greater risk. We advise employers and pregnant women to follow this advice and to continue to monitor for future updates to it.</p> <p>If as a result of conducting a risk assessment or as a result of concerns raised about the woman’s health or pregnancy, then we would expect the woman’s GP or clinician to provide a medical opinion confirming if the employee is fit to return to work.</p> <p>If the GP says the employee can only work from home and the school cannot give them work to do from home or provide any other suitable alternative work, then effectively the employee ends up on medical suspension relating to their pregnancy (on full pay) until circumstances change or maternity leave starts. Please talk to your HR adviser in these circumstances.</p> <p>The two risk assessments are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The standard risk assessment an employer would carry out for any worker that confirms that she is pregnant – this is available on the Egfl on this link - https://www.egfl.org.uk/facilities/health-and-safety/new-expectant-mothers 2. The individual Covid risk assessment that is conducted for staff – this is available on the September opening page of egfl (https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus) under the heading “individual risk assessment and support plan template”
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			So effectively the first RA is something that would be completed for all workers who confirm they are pregnant (e.g. regardless of Covid) and the second RA is Covid related and applies to pregnant women given their clinically vulnerable status
11	STAFF WHO ARE SICK WITH A NON COVID RELATED ILLNESS OR ABSENCE	Follow Standard sickness absence procedures	Enter details of absence on ITrent system or your own HR system Follow processes including referral to OH if appropriate. Continue to talk to HR about the management of these absences during these exceptional times. Understand that there may be a delay in obtaining medical certificates at this time
1 2.	STAFF WHO ARE RELUCTANT TO ATTEND WORK DUE TO ANXIETY FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY RELATED TO COVID 19 AND WHO MAY OTHERWISE BE AT INCREASED RISK FROM COVID 19	<p>Some people with particular characteristics may be at comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19). These staff can attend school as long as the system of controls set out in this guidance (Schools coronavirus (COVID-19) operational guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)) are in place. The reasons for the disparities are complex and there is ongoing research to understand and translate these findings for individuals in the future.</p> <p>Further information is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drivers-of-the-higher-covid-19-incidence-morbidity-and-mortality-among-minority-ethnic-groups-23-september-2020</p> <p>A supportive approach to be taken to understand the concerns of the employee. Reassure, support and identify how/if you can relieve anxiety or provide reassurance. Consult HR on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Consider advising that they seek medical advice if anxiety severe.</p> <p>Before reaching a point where consideration of any formal action including reference to a breach of contractual obligation discuss with HR.</p> <p>People who live with those who have comparatively increased risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) can attend the workplace</p>	<p>Wellbeing resources to provide support and help can be found on this link https://www.egfl.org.uk/sites/default/files/Main/Staff%20Wellbeing.pdf</p> <p>This could include staff from a BAME background who may have concerns and in these circumstances we would ask that headteachers/managers have a conversation (framed within a confidential and sensitive approach) with the member of staff to understand their concerns.</p> <p>There is guidance and an individual risk assessment on the EgFL at this link https://www.egfl.org.uk/coronavirus - see last two documents under the heading 'Planning a phased return to school'</p>

1 3	STAFF WHO WILL NOT ATTEND WORK DUE TO ANXIETY ABOUT TRANSMITTING THE VIRUS TO CLINICALLY VULNERABLE AND CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS	<p>See 7 and 9 above for staff living with clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable household member</p> <p>Supportive approach to be taken to understand concerns of employee.</p> <p>Reassure, support and identify how/if you can relieve anxiety.</p> <p>Consult HR on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Consider advising that they seek medical advice if anxiety severe.</p> <p>Before reaching a point where consideration of any formal action including reference to a breach of contractual obligation discuss with HR.</p> <p>Staff can be advised to contact their trade union for advice and support</p>	<p>Wellbeing resources to provide support and help can be found on this link</p> <p>https://www.egfl.org.uk/sites/default/files/Main/Staff%20Wellbeing.pdf</p>
1 4	STAFF WHO ARE REQUIRED TO SELF-ISOLATE (QUARANTINE) AFTER RETURN TO THE UK OR PRIOR TO HOSPITAL ADMISSION	<p>Under national restrictions in force in England you must not leave home including to travel abroad, unless you have a legally permitted reason to do so, such as for essential work purposes.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus</p> <p>Employees should check with their clinician or hospital about any requirements or measures prior to a hospital admission. If this requires any period of self-isolation then written evidence can be requested.</p>	
1 5	STAFF WHO CANNOT ATTEND WORK DUE TO CHILDCARE	<p>With schools now returning to full opening, some childcare issues for staff should ease. Check and understand background to childcare concerns and ascertain why they cannot now revert to childcare provisions that were in place prior to lockdown.</p> <p>Is the breakdown in childcare provision temporary?</p>	<p>Can they work from home for a short period whilst they arrange childcare provisions?</p> <p>Is this beyond their control or is it a matter of choice (e.g. they do not want to send their child to nursery/school even if a place available)</p>

	RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>Can you be more flexible (e.g. with working hours) on a short-term basis to support them being able to work while they make permanent/long term arrangements for childcare?</p> <p>Can childcare responsibility be shared (e.g. with partner)?</p>	<p>It is important in some cases to establish if the member of staff is required to self-isolate themselves, this could be the case if their child is symptomatic or has had a positive test result. Please refer to categories 2 and 4 above.</p> <p>Consult with HR on a case by case basis especially if having exhausted all other options you are considering a period of unpaid leave</p> <p>Please see additional guidance on childcare below</p>  <p>Guidance on childcare to publish</p> <p>Ensure that you have consistency in approach</p>
1 6	STAFF WHO HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT ATTENDING WORK DUE TO CONCERNS OVER USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT	<p>Can they use another form of transport to get to work, cycle, walk, car?</p> <p>Govt advice currently is that you can help control COVID-19 and travel safely by walking and cycling, if you can. Where this is not possible, use public transport or drive. If using public transport, observe social distancing rules and wear a face mask.</p> <p>To what extent is it possible to review hours to support travel outside peak times. This may be possible for some staff but not others.</p>	<p>Parking dispensations still apply for key workers (incl teachers) until 31st Jan 2021.</p> <p>Consider Govt advice - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers</p> <p>It is now mandatory to wear a face covering when using public transport</p>
1 7	STAFF WHO HAVE CARING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR (a) CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE OR (b)	<p>Consider the different approaches in 6 and 8 above for staff in these categories and establish with the employee whether the circumstances of the person they are caring for have changed. If not, then the staff member may have to make a decision about their longer term position.</p> <p>Please discuss these on a case by case basis with HR.</p>	<p>See advice for member of staff on this link https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-providing-unpaid-care</p>

	CLINICALLY VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS		
1 8	STAFF WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE D A BEREAVEMENT LINKED TO COVID 19	<p>Bereavement Leave Provisions to be applied.</p> <p>Discuss with HR</p> <p>If your school buys into the employee assistance programme provided through workplace options, they may be able to provide support through counselling</p>	<p>Please refer to guidance on this link https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/how-cope-bereavement-and-grief-during-coronavirus-outbreak</p>
1 9	Staff who have other paid employment as 'Carers' and work with CLINICALLY EXTREMELY VULNERABLE & SHIELDED GROUP & CLINICALLY VULNERABLE people	<p>These staff may ask not to attend work due to their other paid employment. It will be reasonable to have a discussion with them and establish if they intend to request a permanent change in their contractual arrangements with the school.</p> <p>The school may or may not be able to accommodate a request for a permanent contractual change.</p>	

Schools are able to request evidence from an employee to support their absence from school, much the same as they would receive a medical certificate to cover sickness absence, subject to the following:

1. A consistent approach must be maintained, please do not ask some staff for evidence but not others
2. Any information received must be treated in strictest confidence and not shared with other staff
3. In some instances, staff may not be able to provide evidence (although someone who is symptomatic and self-isolating can obtain an isolation note through the NHS Online link here <https://111.nhs.uk/isolation-note/>) and those reporting in these circumstances should be accepted on face value