

Supplementary Policy on COVID Isolation Requirements

Introduction

This policy has been written to add clarity for the school's specific circumstances in relation to COVID19 self-isolation requirements for pupils and members of the school community.

Where school has had direct contact from Test and Trace, LHPT, DfE or NYCC such guidance will be followed and will override any provisions contained herein.

Context

Self-Isolation and Return dates: household member testing positive

National and Local Guidance stipulates timescales for self-isolation in a variety of circumstances (e.g. a pupil tests positive, a sibling tests positive etc.). However, one variable is the 'start date' for isolation requirements. Government stay at home guidance stipulates: "Your 14-day isolation period starts from the day when the first person in your household developed symptoms. If you are isolating because someone in your house has had a positive test result but does not have symptoms, your 14-day period starts from the day their test was taken."¹ However, information gained to date from discussions with parents has indicated a certain amount of ambiguity can be present around the onset of symptoms, with uncertainty as to specific days and times. In addition, LA guidance suggests isolation should be 14 days from date of a positive test.

Self-Isolation and Return dates: pupil testing positive

The timescale for an individual leaving self-isolation who has, themselves, tested positive, is shorter than that of their close contacts (10 days, rather than 14). Again, government guidance states this is from the onset of symptoms or from the date of test if they are asymptomatic. However, in this instance, it is likely that school may have been required to instruct that child's 'bubble' or class to self-isolate for 14 days. This could mean that a child who has had COVID was theoretically able to return to school before their wider class could return to school.

School Position on Self Isolation

The school has a duty to safeguard staff (especially clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable), and the wider community. In this primary school setting, social distancing among pupils and between pupils and staff is not consistently possible, thus increasing transmission risk within bubbles.

Isolation Period / Start date:

To eliminate uncertainty and ambiguity, the school's position is that any pupil who has been in contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID19 will self-isolate for 14 days from the date a positive test was undertaken, regardless of whether symptoms started a day or two before this point. This is because, at the time the test was taken, COVID was present in the household, and it is possible that the pupil could contract the virus and remain asymptomatic for up to 2 weeks from that point.

Similarly, any pupil who has had a positive test result must not return to school until 10 days after the test was taken.

Return to school in event of 'bubble closure':

In a case where a child may be eligible to leave self-isolation during the time that their 'group' or bubble is home learning and isolating, the pupil will remain off school until such time as their whole class can return to school. This will, unless guidance is otherwise received from Test and Trace, likely be 14 days from the date of the confirmed positive test.

This policy was adopted by Governors November 2020.

¹ [Stay at Home Guidance, Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance)