



Department for Education

This is your email to keep you updated on the government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19). If you have colleagues who would like to receive this email directly, please ask them to use this [subscription form](#).

The content of today's email is relevant for all settings.

What Step 4 changes mean for education and childcare settings

From today, England has moved to Step 4 of the roadmap. [The Prime Minister has emphasised](#) the need to remain cautious as restrictions are lifted.

We published a webinar last week which provides information on the key changes to COVID-19 measures in education settings, such as 'bubbles', contact tracing, face coverings, self-isolation and testing, in addition to providing answers to some frequently asked questions.

The webinar is available to view on the document sharing platforms and can be accessed using the following links:

- [primary schools and early years](#)
- [secondary schools, further education and higher education](#)
- [children's social care](#)

Further information on Step 4 and the changes to COVID-19 measures in education and childcare settings can be found in our [guidance](#).

We have updated guidance to reflect that we have moved to Step 4 of the roadmap and have converted the following pieces of guidance from PDF to HTML format today, making them more accessible and easier to navigate and read:

- [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#)
- [Actions for early years and childcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools](#)
- [SEND and specialist settings: additional COVID-19 operational guidance](#)
- [Dedicated transport to schools and colleges COVID-19 operational guidance](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for children's social care](#)
- [COVID-19: Actions for out-of-school settings](#)
- [Out-of-school settings: COVID-19 guidance for parents and carers](#)

Changes to contact tracing for schools, colleges and nurseries

From today, schools, colleges and nurseries no longer need to carry out routine contact tracing. From this point onwards, close contacts will be identified and contacted by NHS Test and Trace.

In response to feedback from stakeholders, we have produced guidance, some frequently asked questions and answers, and a template letter for settings to send to parents, pupils and students on changes to contact tracing of close contacts. These can all be found on the document sharing platforms for [primary and early years](#), [secondary schools](#), [further education and higher education](#) and [children's social care](#).

Flu vaccination 2021/22: programme briefing for schools

For the 2021/22 flu season, the flu vaccination programme that already includes all children in primary school will be expanded to children in secondary school. Students in years 7 to 11 will now be offered flu vaccination this autumn term. This significant expansion in the programme is part of the government's wider winter planning to reduce flu levels in the population, and therefore the potential impact on the NHS, when we are likely to see both flu and COVID-19 in circulation.

No decision has been made yet about whether this expanded programme will continue in future years.

As usual, a local school-age immunisation provider will contact your school to agree a date for the vaccination session and the best approach for implementing the programme.

A briefing on the flu vaccination programme can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

New website for parents to help their children catch-up

The department has launched an [information site](#) for parents, to support children of all age ranges and abilities catch up on lost learning from the pandemic. The site features advice and support for parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as programmes, resources and activities for children and young people this summer.

Please do share this with your parent networks.

Further information can be found on the [education catch-up for your child](#) homepage.

Instructions for use with Orient Gene COVID-19 test kits for secondary schools and colleges

A small number of boxes of Orient Gene test kits for ATS testing include incorrect instructions for use. The instructions are incorrect because the swabbing methodology for Orient Gene has been updated for nasal-only swabbing by the manufacturer and is therefore suitable for all secondary age students, if they are able to, under appropriate supervision (this includes 11-year-olds in year 7). The Orient Gene COVID-19 test kits can be used in schools and colleges for ATS testing. Please ensure you are using the instructions which can be found on the [document sharing platform](#) and directly [here](#).

The information below has not changed since our last update

Department for Education COVID-19 helpline

The [Department for Education COVID-19 helpline](#) and the PHE Advice Service (option 1) is available to answer any questions you have about COVID-19 relating to education settings and children's social care.

Department for Education guidance

Our guidance to support education providers, local authorities and parents during the COVID-19 pandemic can be accessed using the links below:

- [Guidance for early years and childcare providers](#)
- [Guidance for schools](#)
- [Guidance for further and higher education providers](#)
- [Guidance for local authority children's services](#)
- [Guidance for special schools and other specialist settings](#)

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