

This matter is being dealt with by:

Public Health Division

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**To all parents and carers of
children in Nottinghamshire
special schools**

05 November 2020

Dear parents and carers,

We've been asking all parents and carers of children at school in Nottinghamshire to support efforts to keep our schools and children as safe as possible in the coronavirus pandemic, and we want to say a big thank you for your support for the various measures introduced by schools, and for following the advice and guidance to help keep our schools open.

As you'll know, coronavirus remains a significant threat to our communities. Nottinghamshire was designated an area of very high alert (Tier 3) from 30 October. Since then, the Prime Minister announced a national lockdown starting on Thursday 5 November. You can find information about the national lockdown at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>. These will be the new basic rules:

- You must stay at home, except for specific reasons such as work and education.
- You must not mix with anybody outside your household or support bubble in any indoor setting or in any private garden.
- You can exercise or meet in a public, outdoors space with people you live with or your support bubble, or when on your own, with one other person, with social distancing in place.
- People in the "clinically extremely vulnerable" category (who previously received information about shielding from their medical practitioner) should take extra care and work from home. The government will write directly to affected individuals about this.

Schools will remain open, with many extra safety measures in place to reduce risk of children catching coronavirus at school. Schools and public health authorities will continue to monitor and respond swiftly to any reported cases. The lockdown **does not** change the expectation that children should attend school.

We know that you will be concerned about the risk of coronavirus and what it means for your child. But evidence shows that most children and young people, including those in special schools, are not at high risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19. Schools have worked hard with Health and Safety and Public Health experts to put in place safety measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19. These include things like grouping children into 'bubbles', and putting extra cleaning and hygiene measures in place, and making changes to reduce equipment sharing. In special schools, there are extra arrangements for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) use.

More evidence has emerged that shows there is a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from COVID-19, even for children with existing health conditions. Speak to your GP or specialist clinician, if you have not already done so, to understand whether your child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. Children in this category are advised not to attend school during the national lockdown period. Your school will make appropriate arrangements for these children to

continue their education at home. Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend school.

You also have a vital role to play in helping to reduce the risk of infection – here are some ways that you can help to keep us all safe.

Social distancing at the school gates

- Remember that social distancing applies when taking or collecting children from school.
- Keep your distance from other people outside your household.
- Avoid car sharing with someone from outside your household or support bubble. You can find further information at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

Breaking the chain of infection

- Keep your children off school if they have coronavirus symptoms (a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste) and get a test for them. You can book a test online at <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119 if you don't have internet access.
- A useful flowchart to help you identify when you should keep your child off school and seek a test is at the end of this letter.
- If anyone in your household has symptoms, all other members of the household must also self-isolate until the test result is received. If your test result is positive, you will get further instructions about what to do.
- **You must not send any of your children to school if there is someone in your household with symptoms or a positive test result.**
- Let the school know immediately if your child has a positive test result.
- If an adult in the household is self-isolating because they have been told to by NHS Test & Trace or the NHS Covid-19 app, or if your child is self-isolating because their bubble has been sent home from school, they must not leave the house even if they have no symptoms. Other people in the household do not need to self-isolate unless they get symptoms.

Following the public health advice

It is crucial that we all continue to follow the public health advice so we can protect our family, friends and communities. Here's a summary of the Hands Face Space advice:

HANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wash hands regularly and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds
FACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wear face coverings in enclosed spaces where you can't keep your distance. In Nottinghamshire schools with year 7 and above, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain.
SPACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• stay 2 metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or 1 metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings).• do not meet socially with friends and family indoors or in private gardens, unless you live with them or have formed a support bubble with them.• exercise or meet in a public, outdoors space with people you live with, your support bubble, or when on your own, with one other person.

Thank you for all of your efforts in helping to keep the virus under control, which contribute to keeping the school environment safe for your child and all their classmates.

Yours sincerely,



Colin Pettigrew
Corporate Director, Children and Families
Nottinghamshire County Council



Jonathan Gribbin
Director of Public Health
Nottinghamshire County Council

Should I send my child to school?

Guidance for parents and carers



For further guidance, visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children/>