

Covid-19 September FAQs

What is classed as an outbreak in a school?

Setting Type	Reporting Threshold
Most education and childcare settings, whichever of these thresholds is reached first:	5 children, pupils, students, and staff, from any group who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive within a 10-day period OR
	10% of any group who are likely to have mixed closely test positive within a 10-day period

What is “mixing closely?”

For schools, this could include:

- a form group or subject class
- a friendship group mixing at breaktimes
- a sports’ team
- a group in an after-school activity

For wraparound childcare or out-of-school settings, this could include:

- a private tutor or coach offering one-to-one tuition to a child, or to multiple children at the same time
- staff and children taking part in the same class or activity session together
- children who have slept in the same room or dormitory together

What are the rules on isolating?

When to self-isolate

Self-isolate straight away and get a [PCR test \(a test that is sent to the lab\) on GOV.UK](#) as soon as possible if you have any of these 3 symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

You should also self-isolate straight away if:

- you've tested positive for COVID-19 – this means you have the virus
- someone you live with has symptoms or tested positive (unless you are not required to self-isolate – check below if this applies to you)
- you've been told to self-isolate following contact with someone who tested positive – [find out what to do if you're told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app](#)

When you do not need to self-isolate

If someone you live with has symptoms of COVID-19, or has tested positive for COVID-19, you will not need to self-isolate if any of the following apply:

- you're fully vaccinated – this means 14 days have passed since your final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine given by the NHS
- you're under 18 years, 6 months old
- you're taking part or have taken part in a COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you're not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Even if you do not have symptoms, you should still:

- get a [PCR test on GOV.UK](#) to check if you have COVID-19
- follow advice on [how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#)
- consider limiting contact with [people who are at higher risk from COVID-19](#)

Tell people you've been in close contact with that you have symptoms

- Tell people you've been in close contact with in the past 48 hours that you might have COVID-19.
- You should tell them to follow advice on [how to avoid catching and spreading COVID-19](#).
- They do not need to self-isolate unless they're contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service.
- If they get any symptoms of COVID-19, they should self-isolate and get a test as soon as possible.

Who will do the contact tracing?

NHS Test & Trace will carry out contact tracing and may contact the school for further information.