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To:

Headteachers, Heads of Governors, MAT  
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## Coronavirus COVID-19

You will all have given much thought to the implications of the coronavirus outbreak for your educational setting, and a few of you have already had to make decisions on individuals who might have been unwell or have come into contact with the virus.

It is understandable, especially in the early stages of an outbreak of a new infection, that there is a lot of concern amongst teachers and parents and with that comes a temptation to react in the most cautious way to any perceived risk, however small.

However, I am writing to urge you to follow Public Health England (PHE) guidance closely. This guidance is very clear and has been carefully prepared to ensure that students and staff are well protected against real risks while not unduly disrupting children's education, the school community and indeed any services that rely on workers with children of school age, including important health and social care services.

If schools adopt policies that are beyond and more precautionary than those suggested by PHE they do not significantly reduce their risks, but do increase worry in the community, and the negative effects on individuals who may be excluded unjustifiably and on the school community where avoidable closures are in place.

I certainly understand that there may be pressures on you. The best way to manage these is to discuss any cases where the course of action may not be clear with PHE (contact details below) who are always available, and then agree the right course of action with them. If a school follows agreed advice it will be supported publicly by PHE, the Council, and myself as local Director of Public Health.

This epidemic may well be with us for some time and it is really important that we are balanced in response especially at this early stage where habits and expectations are being established.

## Guidance for education settings

This updated guidance will assist schools and other educational settings in providing advice for students, pupils, staff and parents or carers regarding:

- the coronavirus, COVID-19
- how to help prevent spread of all respiratory infections including COVID-19
- what to do if someone is confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 and has been in a school or other educational setting
- what advice to give to individuals who have travelled from specified countries or areas within the last 14 days, including school trips
- travel information for specified countries/areas for pupils and students resident or boarding in the UK, we recommend following the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) country advice pages.

Click here for the full guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

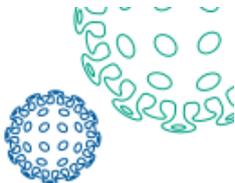
## Coronavirus advice for educational settings poster

This poster accompanies the guidance and should be downloaded, printed and displayed in all education settings. It is aimed at parents, carers, students, headteachers, teaching and support team staff. There is also a landscape version of the poster for digital screens.



Public Health England

# Advice on the coronavirus for places of education



### How serious is the coronavirus?

- it can cause flu-like symptoms, including fever, cough & difficulty breathing
- the infection is not serious for most people, including children
- there is currently no vaccine
- most people get better with enough rest, water to drink and medicine for pain

### How can you stop coronaviruses spreading?

#### If you need to cough or sneeze



Catch it with a tissue



Bin it



Kill it by washing your hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser

#### You should wash hands with soap & water or hand sanitiser



After breaks & sport activities



Before cooking & eating



SCHOOL ETC.



After using the toilet



Before leaving home

- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Do not share items that come into contact with your mouth such as cups & bottles
- If unwell do not share items such as bedding, dishes, pencils & towels

Stop germs spreading with our e-Bug resources on hand and respiratory hygiene lesson plans for KS1, 2 and 3: [campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools](https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools)

### How likely are you to catch the virus?

- you can only catch it if you have been close to a person who has the virus
- the chance of being in contact with the virus is currently low in the UK
- if you have travelled to areas where many people are infected, your chance of catching the virus is higher, i.e. China and any affected areas

### If there is an emergency, call 999 immediately

### What should you do if you feel unwell?

Keep away from others and stay at home to stop the infection spreading. Avoid public transport if you think you have symptoms of coronavirus. If you become unwell at a place of education, tell a member of staff and let them know if you have travelled to any other countries in the last 14 days. If your staff member or parent thinks you have symptoms of coronavirus, they should call **NHS 111** for advice. Follow the UK Government advice for childcare or educational settings [gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19). Parents can visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) to find out more information. Teachers and support staff should follow the UK Government advice. Staff, students and pupils who have returned from Iran, specific lockdown areas in northern Italy, special care zones in South Korea or Hubei province China (returned in the past 14 days) should self isolate, and NOT attend education or work for 14 days. See [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) for advice on coronavirus.

## Public Health England – South West Health Protection Team

If you have any questions, need support or clarification relating to the guidance please contact:

Public Health England – South West Health Protection Team (24/7 telephone service):

- Telephone: 0300 303 8162 (option 1, then option 1)
- Out of hours advice: 0300 303 8162 (option 1)

## Department for Education (DfE) Coronavirus Helpline

The DfE have set up a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. **Staff, parents and young people** can contact the helpline as follows:

Telephone: 0800 046 8687

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

### E-bug resources and lesson plans

I would encourage you to use these useful lesson plans and resources for use in childcare and educational settings. e-Bug resources are recommended by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence to teach pupils about hygiene. Key sections that may be useful are:

#### KS1: Horrid Hands and Super Sneezes

- [Horrid hands](#)
- [Super sneezes](#)

#### KS2: Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Hygiene

- [Hand hygiene](#)
- [Respiratory hygiene](#)

#### KS3: Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Hygiene

- [Hand hygiene](#)
- [Respiratory hygiene](#)

### Further sources of information

- **NHS: answers to common questions about coronavirus**  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/common-questions/>
- **NHS: coronavirus advice for travellers**  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/>
- **GOV.UK: information on coronavirus and the situation in the UK**  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>
- **Public Health Matters Blog: coronavirus – what you need to know**  
<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>
- **Self-isolation video:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-51652874/coronavirus-how-to-self-isolate>

Thank you for your continued support in this matter, we will keep you informed as and when PHE guidance is updated.

Yours faithfully,



**Dr Bruce Laurence**  
**Director of Public Health**  
**Bath & North East Somerset Council**