

9th December 2021

Dear parents & carers,

Below is the advice and guidance on Plan B that impacts on schools. In reality, there are very few, if any, changes for schools at this time. Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Vicki

On Wednesday 8 December, the Prime Minister announced the implementation of [Plan B of the COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan](#), to reduce pressure on the NHS. Plan B sets out a number of additional measures across society to control transmission of COVID-19.

The Government is clear on the critical importance of not disrupting the education of children and young people and the Government will prioritise keeping all education and childcare settings open. The measures set out below will support this.

Attendance

School attendance remains mandatory and all the usual rules continue to apply. Enabling children and young people to attend their education setting regularly continues to be a national priority. As usual, schools are able to grant leaves of absence for pupils in exceptional circumstances.

Face coverings

Face coverings should be worn by staff and visitors in communal areas, unless exempt. This is a temporary measure.

Wrap around provision

Schools and early years settings should continue to offer their usual before and after-school activities, including wraparound childcare. These activities provide valuable childcare for working parents and carers and promote the wellbeing of children and young people.

Working from home

We expect all education and childcare settings, including further and higher education providers, to continue to provide face-to-face teaching, and staff should continue to attend their place of work if required in order to

deliver this. Teaching and learning should not be moved online as a result of the work from home guidance and we continue to expect higher education students (unless distance learners) to receive an element of face-to-face tuition. Therapists and wider children's service professionals should continue to be invited into education and childcare settings.

Education and childcare leaders are best placed to determine the workforce required to meet the needs of their children, pupils and students. Education and childcare leaders will need to consider whether it is possible for specific staff undertaking certain roles to work from home, while minimising disruption to face-to-face education and care.

Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk are not being advised to shield again.

Children and young people previously considered CEV should attend their setting and should follow the same [COVID-19 guidance](#) as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

Testing

We strongly encourage all those involved in education and childcare settings to continue regular testing (LFD not PCR) and reporting their results.

Settings are strongly encouraged to ask parents, guardians and other visitors to take a lateral flow device (LFD) test before entering the setting.

Isolation

All individuals who have been identified as a close contact of a suspected or confirmed case of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, irrespective of vaccination status and age, will continue to be required to self-isolate and asked to book a PCR test.

The Government plans to introduce Daily Contact Testing as soon as possible as an alternative to self-isolation for contacts of positive Omicron cases who are fully vaccinated or under the age of 18 years and 6 months.