COVID-19 (coronavirus) absence: A quick guide for parents / carers



What to do if	Action needed	Back to school
my child has COVID- 19 (coronavirus) symptoms*	 Child shouldn't attend school Child should get a test Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result Inform school immediately about test results 	when child's test comes back negative OR has completed 10 days self isolation AND feels well / without fever for 48 hours
my child tests positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)	 Child shouldn't attend school Child self-isolates for at least 10 days from when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) Inform school immediately about test results Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - even if someone tests negative during those 14 days 	when child has completed at least 10 days of self isolation and they feel better / without fever for 48h They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of smell / taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone.
somebody in my household has COVID- 19 (coronavirus) symptoms*	 Child shouldn't attend school Household member with symptoms should get a test Whole household self-isolates while waiting for test result Inform school immediately about test results 	when household member test is negative, and child does not have COVID-19 symptoms*
in my household has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus)	 Child shouldn't attend school Whole household self-isolates for 14 days from day when symptoms* started (or from day of test if no symptoms) - even if someone tests negative during those 14 days 	when child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during the 14 days

^{*} Symptoms include at least one of a high temperature; a new continuous cough; a loss of or change to your sense of smell or taste. See more at:

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NHS Test and Trace has identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with symptoms* or confirmed COVID-19 (coronavirus)	 Child shouldn't attend school Child self-isolates for 14 days (as advised by NHS Test and Trace) – even if they test negative during those 14 days Rest of household does not need to self-isolate, unless they are a 'close contact' too 	when the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation, even if they test negative during those 14 days
we / my child has travelled and has to self- isolate as part of a period of quarantine	 Do not take unauthorised leave in term time Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice when booking travel Provide information to school as per attendance policy Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed: Child shouldn't attend school Whole household self-isolates for 14 days – even if they test negative during those 14 days 	when the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed for the child, even if they test negative during those 14 days
we have received advice from a medical / official source that my child must resume shielding	 Child shouldn't attend school Contact school as advised by attendance officer / pastoral team Child should shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again 	when school / other agencies inform you that restrictions have been lifted and the child can return to school again
I am not sure who should get a test for COVID -19 (coronavirus)	 Only people with symptoms* need to get a test People without symptoms are not advised to get a test, even if they are a 'close contact' of someone who tests positive 	when conditions above, as matching your situation, are met

For further information: gov.uk/backtoschool