



ST. MATTHEW'S
Roman Catholic High School

We Pray, We Care, We Achieve

St Matthew's R.C. High School Covid-19 Response

Parental Guide - September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We understand that you may have many questions at this time due to the high media attention on the return to school for all year groups and the focus on the rising infection rate in the north west of England. We have put together this 'Frequently Asked Questions' document to reassure you that a huge amount of planning work has been completed to help protect the health and wellbeing of our students and staff. We hope you find this document useful and if you have any further questions please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance.

Regards

Mr S Atkin

Deputy Headteacher

The following document is based on the detailed guidance issued by the government. Please see the full document for more in depth advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Identifying symptoms of Covid-19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- A new continuous cough
- A high temperature (fever)
- A loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Any one of the above symptoms gives reason for high level of suspicion for COVID-19.

An unwell person or child could be a possible case of COVID-19.

A combination of 2 or more symptoms below gives reason for high level of suspicion for COVID-19.

- Vomiting / nausea / lack of appetite
- Diarrhoea
- Sleeping more than usual
- Complaining of not feeling themselves
- Listless/restless/agitated
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling cold, headache
- Severe body aches
- Sore throat/congested or runny nose - anything that is not feeling themselves.

For fevers, the NHS advice is to look for a high temperature – ‘this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back; you do not need to measure your temperature’

FAQs: Dealing with suspected cases, testing, & positive cases

Q1: What should I do if my child is at home and is displaying one of the common symptoms of Covid-19, or a combination of other symptoms as listed above?

DO NOT send your child into school if they are unwell as outlined above. Please inform the school as soon as it is possible to do so. You are advised to take your child for testing as soon as possible and you must inform the school of any test results (positive and negative). A local test is now very easy to book via this link

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/> Your child will need to self-isolate and the rest of your household will also need to self-isolate (as you are all close contacts) until the result of the test is known.

Q2: What happens if my child begins to display one of the common symptoms of Covid-19, or a combination of other symptoms whilst in school?

Your child will be assessed on site and if found to have one or more of the symptoms listed above they will be isolated. You will then be contacted and asked to collect your child from school immediately. You will be advised to arrange a Covid-19 test as soon as possible - we can help you to arrange this through the local authority. Your child should then self-isolate whilst awaiting the results from the Covid-19 test. The rest of the household will also need to self-isolate (as you are all close contacts) and watch for symptoms developing until the result of the test is known. You should inform the school immediately when the test results are returned.

Q3: If a child or staff member in school is sent home with symptoms of Covid-19, what's the impact on other pupils? Will other pupils be sent home too?

If we have a suspected case in school we will isolate that child and send them home, telling them to stay at home until the outcome of their test is known. If the child with symptoms also has siblings in school in other year groups, they too will have also go home and stay at home (because they are part of the same household bubble) until the outcome of their brother / sister's test is known. No further action would be taken at this stage as we await the result of the test. This means, all other pupils and teachers would remain in school, assuming they don't have symptoms themselves. If the test result comes back as negative, that person who originally had symptoms may return to school once they feel well enough (with the exception of fever, diarrhoea and vomiting where the individual needs to be 48 hours free of these symptoms) and their siblings may return to school, assuming they are symptom-free.

Q4: What happens if my child is unwell and is tested for Covid-19 but that test comes back negative?

You should inform school immediately of the negative test result. Your child can then return to school when they are no longer feeling unwell. The rest of the household no longer needs to self-isolate and can return to work/school immediately.

Q5: What happens if my child is tested for Covid-19 and that test comes back positive?

You should inform the school immediately of the positive test result. Your child should self-isolate for a minimum of 10 days (from the date the symptoms started if they had symptoms or from the date of their test if they were symptom-free) or until they feel better and their symptoms have gone if this is longer. Other members of your household should also self-isolate for a minimum of 14 days (from the date the symptoms started if your child had symptoms or from the date of their test if they were symptom-free) whilst they watch for symptoms developing and should be tested if symptoms do develop in that time.

Q6: What happens if another child in my child's year group bubble is tested for Covid-19 and that test comes back positive?

Potentially all children in the year group bubble of the positive case would have to isolate for 14 days from the date of their last close contact with that person when they were infectious (we would be led by the advice of local authority health protection team in terms of whether the whole year bubble had to self-isolate or not). All staff would be risk assessed and if any members of staff are also found to have been a close contact of the infected person, then they would also have to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of their last close contact (and so wouldn't be able to attend work).

Contacts of contacts do not have to isolate. This means if your child is sent home to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone in their year group who has tested positive, you and your family do NOT need to self-isolate (because you are a contact of a contact). Your child (as a contact) does not need to be sent for testing and even a negative test for a contact does not mean they can come out of isolation (because they could still have caught the virus without it showing up on the test because it could still be in the incubation period). Only if a contact develops symptoms should they then get tested.

In the event of an outbreak (two or more positive cases in a week), the wider school community will also be informed of the situation with a reminder to keep a watch out for symptoms developing.

Q7: What would happen to my child if another child in another year group tests positive?

Your child should be able to carry on coming to school as normal because they are in a different year group bubble. However, if your child was found to actually be a close contact of the infected child in the 48hrs prior to them displaying symptoms (for example, they sat very close to the infected person on the bus to/from school or they breached their year group bubble whilst in the building), your child in these circumstances would then have to self-isolate for 14 days.

Q8: What should my child do if someone else in our household is unwell with symptoms and/or is awaiting the result of a test for coronavirus?

In the event that anyone in your household is potentially unwell with the Covid-19 symptoms, that person should seek a Covid-19 test as soon as possible. In the meantime, you SHOULD NOT send your child into school and you should inform the school immediately. The remainder of the household should also self-isolate to watch for symptoms until the result of the test is known. Your child should still take part in their normal lessons online.

School must be informed of the outcomes of any Covid-19 testing within your household (both positive and negative).

- In the event that a household member receives a negative test result for Covid-19, your child can return to school immediately (assuming they are symptom-free themselves)
- In the event that a household member receives a positive test for Covid-19, your child should continue to self-isolate for 14 days from the day the other household member first had symptoms - even your child is still not displaying any symptoms themselves.

On receiving a positive result, the household should log on to the NHS Test and Trace portal to identify all their close contacts (<https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk/>).

Q9: What will happen if a teacher / staff member that has taught my child is off work or sent home with symptoms of Covid-19?

Your child can continue to come to school as normal (assuming they don't have symptoms themselves) as we await the result of the test of the member of staff who went home.

If their test comes back negative:

- The staff member will only return once they feel well enough.
- All pupils will continue to come to school as normal

If the test comes back positive:

- The staff member will continue to self-isolate for 10 days and only return once they feel well enough.
 - The impact on your child would ultimately depend on whether your child was actually a close contact of that member of staff in the 48hrs prior to them developing symptoms.
- If the member of staff can confirm that a 2-metre social distance was maintained with their classes at all times in the 48hrs prior to their symptoms developing, then no other action will need to be taken – the students are NOT close contacts
 - If the member of staff cannot confirm that a 2-metre social distance was maintained with their classes at all times in the 48hrs prior to their symptoms developing, then all children in the classes taught by that teacher may need to self-isolate for 14 days – as those students are now close contacts of a person who has tested positive for Covid-19

Q10: What if I don't want my child to be tested?

It is imperative that we are proactive in helping to reduce the spread of this virus and we would urge all parents and carers to seek testing where necessary for all members of their household bubble if symptoms occur. Please speak to us if you have any concerns or if you need any help in arranging a test.

Q11: What if my child is unwell and I suspect it is simply a case of seasonal flu / a common cold?

Whilst we recognize that flu-like illnesses are prevalent at this time of year, the only way we can be certain is through testing.

Many of the symptoms of Covid-19 overlap those of a common cold or the flu, however, as per the guidelines at the start of this document, if your child or anyone in your household is displaying one of the more common symptoms or two or more of the additional symptoms, then we must treat it as a possible case of Covid-19 and act accordingly.

What do we mean by a 'contact'?

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic and up to 10 days following the onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:

- People who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Close personal relationships/partners
- A person who has had face-to-face contact (within 1 metre), with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), including: being coughed on, having a face-to-face conversation within 1 metre, or having skin-to-skin physical contact, or any contact within 1 metre for one minute or longer
- A person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) for more than 15 minutes
- A person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive.