

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Newham educational settings that are continuing to be open for children of key workers – from Newham Public Health Team 23rd March 2020**

### **1. What are the Standard Operating Procedures for working with children who may have been exposed to the virus as their parents work with people who have COVID-19 infection?**

- People knowingly exposed to the virus (sometimes referred to as having ‘close contact’), children or adults, must not attend school.
- Anyone living in a household with someone who has COVID-19 symptoms of high fever (37.8 degrees or higher) and/or persistent cough should self-isolate at home for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms themselves
- Parents who work with people with COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. medical and nursing staff or social care workers) wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to protect them from the virus;
- PPE stock for the NHS and care homes were replenished last week. PPE delivery is continuing into this week too.
- Therefore, parents who work with COVID-19 suspected people are unlikely to become infected;
- If, however, any parents or staff develop high temperature (37.8 or higher) and/or persistent cough, they must self-isolate at [home for 7 days](#) immediately and their children, as members of their household, because they may have been exposed to the virus at that point, will need to be isolated for 14 days. If, during this period, those who did not initially have symptoms now start showing symptoms, they must self-isolate for 7 days, from a day when first symptom occurred;
- It is recommended to schools to communicate these messages to all parents who classify as key workers and, every morning, school staff may ask the following questions:
  - Do you or your child or any member of your household have a high temperature (37.8 degrees or higher) and/or a persistent cough? If the answer is yes, they should not be allowed to leave their child at the school.

### **2. What systems should be put in place to keep the staff safe?**

For children and staff who remain at schools, social distancing measures and general hygiene measures should be applied at all times:

- Washing hands more often - with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitiser, if washing basin is not available, when you get home or into work/school, when you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, eat or handle food;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid close contact with people who have symptoms;

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands;
- All staff and children coming to school should avoid all non-essential public transport travel, whenever possible and, outside school hours, should minimise social interactions, as per the [national guidelines](#);
- In school, keep windows opened, keep a distance of 2m between children and staff, avoid contact sport, no ball games, use of books or keyboards;
- Activities that can continue is a walk in a playground (but not using equipment that cannot be cleaned after each child) or watching educational programmes or movies;
- Due to a reduced number of children in school, keeping open only a part of the school would make it easier to maintain regular cleaning;
- PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is not recommended for frontline staff who do not work with children and adults with COVID-19 symptoms.

### 3. What is the current advice for staff with underlying health conditions?

- The main objective of COVID-19 response is to protect our staff and vulnerable residents. To do this, we recommend that people with [underlying health conditions](#) (as defined by Public Health England) stay at home. This includes all frontline staff [underlying health conditions](#);
- We understand that, for some frontline staff, this is a particularly difficult decision as it may stop them from continuing in their current role. However, we do strongly advise you to follow the PHE and Newham Council's guidelines, in all circumstances. This is because these groups of staff, however healthy they are now, are at increased risk of catching the virus and having more severe illness with potentially serious outcomes;
- It is unlikely that staff would not be aware or have undetected underlying conditions from the list specified in PHE guidelines. However, if staff are worried that this may be the case, they should contact their GP to confirm.

### 4. What to do if someone develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) on site?

- If anyone becomes unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature in an education setting they should be sent home and advised to follow the [staying at home guidance](#);
- If a child is awaiting collection, they should be moved, if possible and if appropriate, to a room where they can be isolated behind a closed door. Settings should be mindful of individual children's needs – for example it would not be appropriate for younger children to be alone without adult supervision. Ideally, a window should be opened for ventilation. If it is not possible to isolate them, move them to an area which is at least 2 metres away from other people;
- If they need to go to the bathroom while waiting to be collected, they should use a separate bathroom if possible. The bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected using standard cleaning products before being used by anyone else;

- If they need clinical advice, they (or their teacher, parent or guardian) should go online to [NHS 111](#) (or call 111 if they don't have internet access). In an emergency, call 999 if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk. Do not visit the GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital;
- If a member of staff has helped someone who was taken unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature, they do not need to go home unless they develop symptoms themselves. They should wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds after any contact with someone who is unwell.

#### **5. If someone on site developed COVID-19 symptoms, how do we ensure that the area is cleaned properly?**

Public Health England has issued guidance for cleaning public areas for non-healthcare settings if they had a case of suspected COVID-19 infection.

The key things that must be followed are highlighted below. However, please read the full guidance [carefully here.](#)  
<<<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>>>

- Cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant after someone with suspected coronavirus (COVID-19) has left will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people;
- If an area can be kept closed and secure for 72 hours, wait until this time has passed before cleaning. The level of contamination from the virus that might be living on surfaces will have reduced;
- Wherever possible, wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. These should be double-bagged, then stored securely for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished;
- Use a disposable cloth, first clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water. Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you normally use. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells and door handles;
- If an area has been heavily contaminated, such as with visible bodily fluids, from a person with coronavirus (COVID-19), consider using protection for the eyes, mouth and nose, as well as wearing gloves and an apron;
- Follow the waste disposal procedure as outlined in the guidance, contaminated waste bags should be stored for 72 hours before being put out for collection;
- Wash hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, and after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning.