



To All Headteachers

**Children, Young People and Education**

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Dear Colleague

Following the Prime Minister's announcements yesterday I want to ensure that all schools are aware of the updated guidance that has been published by the DfE. I also want to highlight some of the notable changes compared to the guidance published previously.

As many of you will be aware, aspects of my updates are derived from daily DfE bulletins. These are also sent to schools but if you have colleagues who would like to receive the emails directly, please ask them to use this [subscription form](#).

The updated guidance for mainstream and special schools, special post-16 providers and alternative provisions can be found using the following links:

- [actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak](#)
- [special schools, special post-16 providers and alternative provision](#)

**School attendance**

From 8<sup>th</sup> March, the usual rules will apply, including:

- parents' duty to secure their child's regular attendance at school (where the child is a registered pupil at school and they are of compulsory school age)
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

As usual, schools are responsible for recording attendance, following up absence and reporting children missing education to the Local Authority.

Secondary schools, special schools and alternative provisions should use code Y for pupils not expected to be attending school for lessons during the week of 8<sup>th</sup> March due to the asymptomatic testing programme.

### **Use of Face Covering in Schools**

The changes to the use of face coverings primarily relate to provisions with Secondary aged pupils. It is now recommended that, in those schools, face coverings should be worn in classrooms or during activities unless social distancing can be maintained. This does not apply in situations where wearing a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity, for example in PE lessons. These measures will be kept under review.

### **Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Staff and Pupils**

The DfE state there is growing evidence that many children identified at the start of the pandemic as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) are not at increased risk of serious outcomes from coronavirus (COVID-19) and children are gradually being removed from the shielding patient list (SPL) as appropriate, following review with a clinician.

However, the advice for pupils who are still confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable is to shield and stay at home as much as possible until further notice. They are advised not to attend school while shielding advice applies nationally.

Similar advice applies to staff members who are deemed to be CEV and they should not attend the workplace if they are required to shield.

### **Rapid Testing Programme in Secondary and Special Schools and Alternative Provisions**

The DfE have produced further guidance for schools carrying out rapid testing for pupils and staff which is attached below:



Why, who, what  
and when to test.pc

In addition, the DfE will be running a webinar tomorrow between 12pm and 2pm to provide schools and colleges with an update on the rapid testing programme. The link below will take you to the webinar. If you are unable to join, it will be recorded and available to watch shortly after.

[Rapid testing webinar – 24 February, 12pm to 2pm](#)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Adams'.

David Adams  
Interim Director of Education