



LCRC Response to Cases and Outbreaks of COVID-19 in School and Educational Settings

V00.01

Purpose: To outline the proposed approach of the London Coronavirus Response Cell(LCRC) in managing cases and outbreaks of COVID-19 in school and educational settings and inform the development of effective joint-working arrangements between PHE and Local Authorities.

Confirmed Cases

- We are asking schools to notify the LCRC of any **confirmed** COVID cases (in staff or students) reported to them
- Possible cases should be sent home, given isolation advice, and have a test arranged in line with the DfE guidance for schools available [here](#) (LCRC only need to be notified of **confirmed** cases)
- LCRC *should* be notified separately through Track and Trace of any staff or student who is tested and confirmed to have COVID-19, but schools are asked to notify directly to ensure cases are not missed

Contacting Case

- On notification of a confirmed case, the LCRC will contact the case to obtain further information and undertake a risk assessment
- This will consider:
 - Whether case was in school 48 hours prior to symptoms (or test result if asymptomatic) or within 7 days after onset of symptoms
 - Whether the case had contact with any other individuals and the nature of this contact (i.e. does the contact meet the criteria for direct / proximity / travel contact)
- LCRC will provide the following isolation advice:
 - They should not attend school until 7 days after date of onset (or date of test if asymptomatic) AND have not had temperature for 48 hours
 - They can attend school if they still have a cough but no temperature if it is more than 7 days since the date of onset or date of test
- LCRC will advise the case that we will be contacting the school to obtain further information (if not already done so, we will encourage case to notify school themselves)

Contacting School

- School will be contacted by LCRC to confirm nature of case's contact with others and possible exposure
- If case has not been in school 48 hours prior to symptoms (or test result) or within 7 days after, no further action will be recommended by HPT
- LCRC will work with school to identify which students and staff meet definition of direct / proximity / travel contacts during the infectious period of case
- The expected default will be that class contacts will fall into the category of direct or proximity contacts as per current DfE guidance available [here](#)
- LCRC will provide headteacher with suggested letter to send to identified contacts advising 14-day isolation, although household contacts of contacts will not need to self-isolate
- LCRC will also discuss how school are implementing social distancing and infection, prevention and control (IPC) measures, and provide advice as required (relevant guidance is [here](#) and [here](#))

Notification to Local Authority Teams

- LCRC will encourage headteacher to notify the Local Authority of the situation
- LCRC will also notify the Local Authority of public health actions taken via a line listing with metrics.
- A sharepoint with documents and template letters will made available and kept up to date



Outbreaks

- We are also asking schools to notify the LCRC if they have either:
 - Two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among students or staff in the school/college within 14 days or;
 - An overall increase in sickness absence reporting where parents report illness with suspected COVID-19 (but where no tests have been done or results are available)

Contacting School

- When notified of a possible outbreak, the LCRC will obtain further information from the school to inform a risk assessment (this may involve asking the school to complete a data return)
- This will include details of the setup of the school, total number of staff and students confirmed or symptomatic, vulnerability of student population, potential number of contacts and current social distancing and IPC measures
- LCRC will also discuss how school are implementing social distancing and infection, prevention and control (IPC) measures, and provide advice as required (relevant guidance is [here](#) and [here](#))

Management of outbreak

- LCRC will undertake a risk assessment to consider the severity and spread of outbreak, current control measures and the wider context (including communications from the school, anxiety level amongst students, staff and families, media interest etc.)
- LCRC will inform the local authority (pending local discussions) and jointly consider need for Outbreak Control Team (OCT)
- LCRC (or OCT) will help school to identify contacts who need to isolate (any symptomatic contacts will be encouraged to access testing)
- LCRC will provide school with letters to be sent to contacts and non-contacts

Notification to Local Authority Teams

- LCRC will notify Local Authority of any COVID outbreaks in schools
- School asked to notify LCRC of any further cases or outbreak develops any concerning features such as a death in a student or staff member

Further investigation / Swabbing

- The LCRC **may** advise widespread swabbing of the staff and student population, particularly in the early stages of T&T (**Following discussion with ROC**)
- However, it is important to note that primarily this would be to add to overall understanding of COVID transmission rather than to inform the management of individual outbreaks
- Arranging this will require discussion with partners in the local system

Further advice and PPE

- Department of Education's helpline for schools - 0800 046 8687 - should respond to all queries from schools (particularly in relation to published guidance)
- The DfE guidance asks Local Authorities to support schools to access local PPE supplies and available stock, escalating through Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) if required