

Coronavirus – general update Scotland

1. General update

Coronavirus in Scotland-Stopping the spread starts with all of us.

You should:

- wear a face covering
- avoid crowded places
- clean hands and surfaces regularly
- stay 2m away from other people
- self-isolate and book a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms (new continuous cough, fever or loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste)

From Tuesday 5 January, mainland Scotland will move from Level 4 to a temporary Lockdown, [with new guidance to stay at home](#) except for essential purposes. Some islands will remain at [Level 3](#).

Download the [Protect Scotland contact tracing app](#).

2. Children's services related guidance

Health Protection Scotland

Stay up to date by reading;

[COVID-19: Information and Guidance for Social, Community and Residential Care Settings \(excluding Adult and Older People Care Home settings\)](#)

This guidance is to support those working in Social, Community and Residential care settings to give advice to their staff and users of their services about COVID-19. It does not cover care home settings, as separate guidance is provided for care home settings.

Below are two associated links which have been developed by Health protection Scotland one for general advice and the other a checklist to assist with managing an outbreak

[Advice for Social or Community Care and Residential Settings Staff](#)

[Social, Community Care and Residential Settings Outbreak Checklist](#)

Scottish Government-Coronavirus (COVID-19): residential childcare - click [here](#)

This guidance is for organisations and their staff working in residential children's houses, residential schools, secure care and residential respite/short break services for children and young people. ***It supports the management of these services, taking account of local guidance and the public health guidance.***

Managers and staff should make themselves familiar with COVID-19 advice available from Health Protection Scotland (above), and regularly review that information. It is important that the most up-to-date guidance is used and that managers and staff are knowledgeable about current guidance. Always access guidance online wherever possible and check regularly for any updated advice.

Care Inspectorate Scotland

CIS compendium guide

The Care Inspectorate has developed a [compendium of guidance and information in relation to COVID-19](#).

Coronavirus – general update Scotland

The compendium focuses on the information that is most relevant to the operation and delivery of regulated care services and is intended primarily to support our staff in advising services. However, the range of information may also be directly useful to services.

The compendium is regularly updated as guidance is developed and revised.

FAQ'S

These frequently asked questions relate to all residential services for children and young people, including care homes, school care accommodation services, and secure accommodation services, school care accommodation and short break services

[Residential Services for Children and Young People Frequently Asked Questions](#)

****Due to the constant evolution of our understanding about COVID-19 disease, guidance is constantly reviewed and updated. You are advised to check all links regularly for the most up to date information.****

Visitors and gatherings in residential settings

The decision on whether to proceed with face to face visits within the service should be considered within your visitor risk assessment, with account taken of physical distancing and hygiene measures, including face coverings if deemed appropriate. The arrangements and decisions around supervised contact lie with social work departments to determine what is in the best interests of the child or young person. For young people who would ordinarily go home for family visits, services should follow public health guidance and risk assess each young person's situation e.g. giving consideration to the impact on their usual routines, if they or others are symptomatic or have increased vulnerability etc.

For more information click [here](#) or [here](#)

Virtual visits - children's homes

The use of virtual visits should be the exception and can be used as a result of public health advice or when it is not reasonably practicable to have a face-to-face visit otherwise for a reason relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This could include in the event of local restrictions, self-isolation or social distancing advice due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

All uses of this temporary flexibility must be recorded, for example in individual case records, and those records should include the reasons why a virtual visit was necessary. Services may also find it helpful to keep a separate collated record in which cases the flexibility has been used.

3. Education

In Scotland, schools will remain closed to the majority of pupils until at least 1 February, with remote learning used instead. Schools will only open their doors to the children of key workers and vulnerable youngsters. There'll be a review on 18 January as to whether schools can reopen on 1 February.


Colleges and universities can operate using a [more restricted mix of face-to-face and distance learning](#).

Scotland's Higher and Advanced Higher exams [have been cancelled for 2021](#), with final grades based on teacher assessment. The National 5 exams [have also been cancelled](#).

Covid-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG)

This section provides an overview of advice from the COVID-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG), applicable to children and young people 3-18. Where advice comprises revision of earlier versions, these revisions are highlighted.

Coronavirus – general update Scotland

The most recent key advice from CERG is  [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools \(version 4.3\)](#) which was published on 30 October 2020.

The key points in that paper include the following:

- An overview of issues;
- Key scientific and public health advice;
- School operations;
- Supporting the wellbeing of children and young people;
- Contingency planning;
- Communications.

There are also annexes covering:

- related guidance and links;
- health and safety risk assessment;
- supplementary guidance for residential boarding/hostel accommodation in education facilities.

Education Scotland's Safe Learning in Scotland: Building on our Success

These documents provide a brief overview of current expectations and changes to guidance for early learning and childcare centres and schools. Childminders offering the ELC funded entitlement should refer to the [updated guidance](#) for childminding settings.

 [PDF file: Education Scotland summary guidance - 2 November 2020 \(494 KB\)](#)

 [PDF file: Education Scotland summary guidance for ELC - 5 November 2020 \(385 KB\)](#)

The [Scottish Government website](#) also contains detailed and comprehensive advice covering all aspects of services for education and children.

4. Testing

Care home testing guidance

If an individual has COVID-19 symptoms visit the [NHS Inform website](#) to arrange testing. If unable to access the website, then call [NHS 111](#). If the individual is unwell and requires clinical assessment then seek advice on [NHS Inform](#) and contact [NHS 111](#) via telephone, or online. Staff may need to call on behalf of the individual.

As part of the 'Test and Protect' approach, everyone with symptoms is encouraged to get tested. Tests can be booked through [NHS Inform](#).

If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 999 and inform the call handler or operator that the unwell person may have coronavirus (COVID-19).

If two or more individuals develop symptoms of COVID-19 within the home, you must contact your Health Protection Team (HPT). A COVID-19 outbreak is defined as two linked cases of the disease over a 14 day period.

Staff Testing

Coronavirus – general update Scotland

All care staff can have access to testing and this should be done either by self-referral or an employer or organisation. [See NHS Inform advice for key workers](#) for further information. Additionally, see [Scottish Government guidance](#) on coronavirus testing, including who is eligible for a test, how to get tested and the different types of test available

Staff who develop symptoms and have a negative PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 should be managed in accordance with the flowchart for return to work following a SARS-CoV-2 test at [management of exposed staff and patients in health and social care setting](#).

Staff and young people should adhere to the test and protect advice on [NHS Inform](#).

Staff who have recovered from COVID-19

Staff who have recovered from COVID-19 should follow the guidance on [management of exposed staff and patients in health and social care setting](#) as appropriate.

Staff who have had confirmed COVID-19 and have since recovered must continue to follow the IPC measures as for all other staff including PPE.

Organisations and employers should monitor staff health and provide advice on any health and support needs

Testing - Education

All staff working in and with schools, along with the children and young people in their care, should be supported to follow up to date health protection advice on household or self-isolation and Test and Protect procedures if they or someone in their household exhibits COVID-19 symptoms, or if they have been identified by NHS contact tracers as a close contact of someone with the virus. Guidance on this is available from [NHS Inform](#), [Parent Club](#) and [gov.scot](#).

The National Clinical Director has also written an open letter to parents and carers providing guidance on how COVID-19 symptoms differ from those of other infections circulating at this time of year.

Symptomatic children, young people and staff can book a test through <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>, the employer referral portal (for staff only – see below) or, if they cannot get online, by calling 0800 028 2816.

Schools will also be able to register their symptomatic staff as category 3 key workers under the [employer referral portal](#), to ensure priority access to testing. The nature of this portal is to prioritise tests and appointments over the general public. This route directs individuals through to a Regional Test Centre or Mobile Testing Unit (whichever is nearer). For those who cannot access an RTC/MTU (if they do not have access to a car or live too far away), they can order a home test kit.

Testing - general population

Test and Protect is a public health measure designed to break chains of transmission of COVID-19 in the community. This approach operates by identifying cases of COVID-19, tracing the people who may have become infected by spending time in close contact with them, and then supporting those close contacts to self-isolate, so that if they have the disease they are less likely transmit to it to others. Further details can be found on the Scottish Government [website](#) and [NHS Inform](#). Guidance on the general approach to contact tracing and contact tracing in complex settings, including health and social care staff, patients and residents, is available on the [HPS website](#).

Vaccination

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine does not cause a coronavirus infection. It helps to build up your immunity to the virus, so your body will fight it off more easily if it affects you.

This can reduce your risk of developing coronavirus and make your symptoms milder if you do get it.

Coronavirus – general update Scotland

“The vaccine is your best protection against coronavirus. It's not mandatory but NHS Scotland strongly recommends you get the vaccine when offered it.” (NHS Scotland)

[FAQ's](#)

Further information about vaccination can also be found [here](#) via Public Health Scotland website