

Public Health · Cumbria House · 110-117 · Botchergate · Carlisle · Cumbria · CA1 1RD

Dear Headteacher,

ADVICE TO SCHOOLS RE COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Cases of coronavirus are predicted to increase. This means that the likelihood of your school having a pupil or member of staff either test positive, or being in contact with a confirmed case and advised to self-isolate, is increasing.

Currently if there is a confirmed case at your school you will be contacted by Public Health England who will advise on the appropriate and proportionate steps to take. This will vary on a case by case basis, but may have operational implications for the school.

If you have a pupil or staff member who is self-isolating due to contact with a confirmed case then the current national advice is that schools should remain open and business continue as usual.

Ultimately, it is at your discretion how your school responds.

In either scenario it will be important to proactively manage communication with pupils, parents, governors, staff and the wider community carefully, providing accurate, timely information that avoids rumours escalating and creating disproportionate alarm.

- If you require it, advice and support is available from the Cumbria County Council Communications Team on 01228 221008 (office hours) or 07500 066520 (out of hours).

We would recommend that you begin actively planning for these scenarios now if you are not already doing so.

Please remember that while increasing, the risk at this stage still remains low and the specific risk to children from COVID-19 is low.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Cox,
Cumbria Director of Public Health

Useful links:

- All the latest national information and advice for the general public is available from the NHS pages.
- Guidance - Coronavirus (COVID-19): latest information and advice - The Department of Health and Social Care will be publishing updated data every day at 2pm until further notice.
- COVID-19 guidance for non-clinical settings - Information on the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) including guidance for professionals helping people in the education, transport and other sectors.

And specific advice for schools and education settings can be found here

- Guidance to educational settings about COVID-19 - Guidance for schools and other educational settings in providing advice about the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.
- Guidance for Universities.