

**ADDITIONAL COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATION SETTINGS:
MITIGATION MEASURES & CONTINGENCY PLANNING
17TH JANUARY 2022**

OVERVIEW

The following document outlines additional guidance to support implementation of enhanced Covid-19 mitigation measures for Schools and Early Years settings, where appropriate following a risk assessment in conjunction with the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team. It is intended as an additional information resource to be used alongside:

[Contingency framework: education and childcare settings](#)

[Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#)

[Actions for early years and childcare providers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[Actions for FE colleges and providers during the coronavirus outbreak](#)

[Rapid asymptomatic testing in specialist settings](#)

It is recommended that any additional measures are only introduced after discussion with Lincolnshire Health Protection Team or Department for Education (DfE).

USEFUL CONTACTS

1. Lincolnshire City Council

- a. Public Health team for all Covid-19 questions or queries:
Healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk or Tel: 01522 552993
- b. Education team for all non Covid-19 questions or queries:
educationteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk

2. UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA): phe.crc.eastmidlands@phe.gov.uk or Tel: 03442 254 524

- a. For out of hours guidance and Covid-related support.
- b. For out of hours escalation to the Lincolnshire Health Protection Team for enhanced local support in complex situations.

3. Department for Education

- a. For advice or information on Covid-19 issues: dfc.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk
or Tel: 0800 046 8687

WHEN TO USE THIS GUIDANCE

You should refer to this guidance alongside your settings own contingency plans to support decision-making and management of positive cases in your setting. The guidance covers the following topics:

- Measures to follow all of the time;
- Enhanced measures for multiple cases;
- How to establish whether cases are linked within your setting;
- Dealing with multiple clusters of linked cases within your setting;
- Supporting Resources.

MEASURES TO FOLLOW ALL OF THE TIME



- Emphasise good hand washing technique – sanitising gel should only be used if there is no alternative.
- Washing hands with soap and water is better at reducing transmission of Covid-19 but also reduces the risk of spreading other infectious diseases such as sickness, diarrhoea, colds or flu.



- Up to 27th January, all persons in secondary schools and staff/ adults in primary schools & early years settings should continue to wear face coverings when moving through corridors and communal areas.
- From 27th January, we recommend that face coverings are worn in crowded and indoor spaces where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet, as determined by the school.

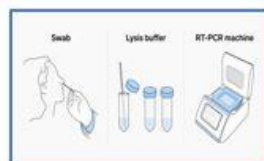


- Comprehensive information on the HSE website.
- Keep windows open where possible – including just top windows when the weather gets colder.
- Purge rooms during break times when pupils are not there or staff rooms during lesson times when staff are not there – open all doors and windows to let the air blow through.
- Where space and weather permits, carry out activities outdoors as much as possible.



- Strongly encourage all those eligible to carry out twice weekly LFD testing.

- Strongly encourage all those who are eligible to get vaccinated.



- Emphasise messages regarding not coming to school if symptomatic and to get a PCR test.
- Emphasise message of isolating if tested positive or if a close contact and not: doubly vaccinated, under 18 years and 6 months or medically exempt from vaccination.
- Provide clear instructions on informing the school of a positive test.
- Advise close contacts of a positive case to complete seven days of LFD testing after being in close contact.



- Carry out regular cleaning, particularly of common touch points or busy areas.

SELF-ISOLATION RULES FOR POSITIVE CASES

Individuals who test positive for Covid-19 should self-isolate.

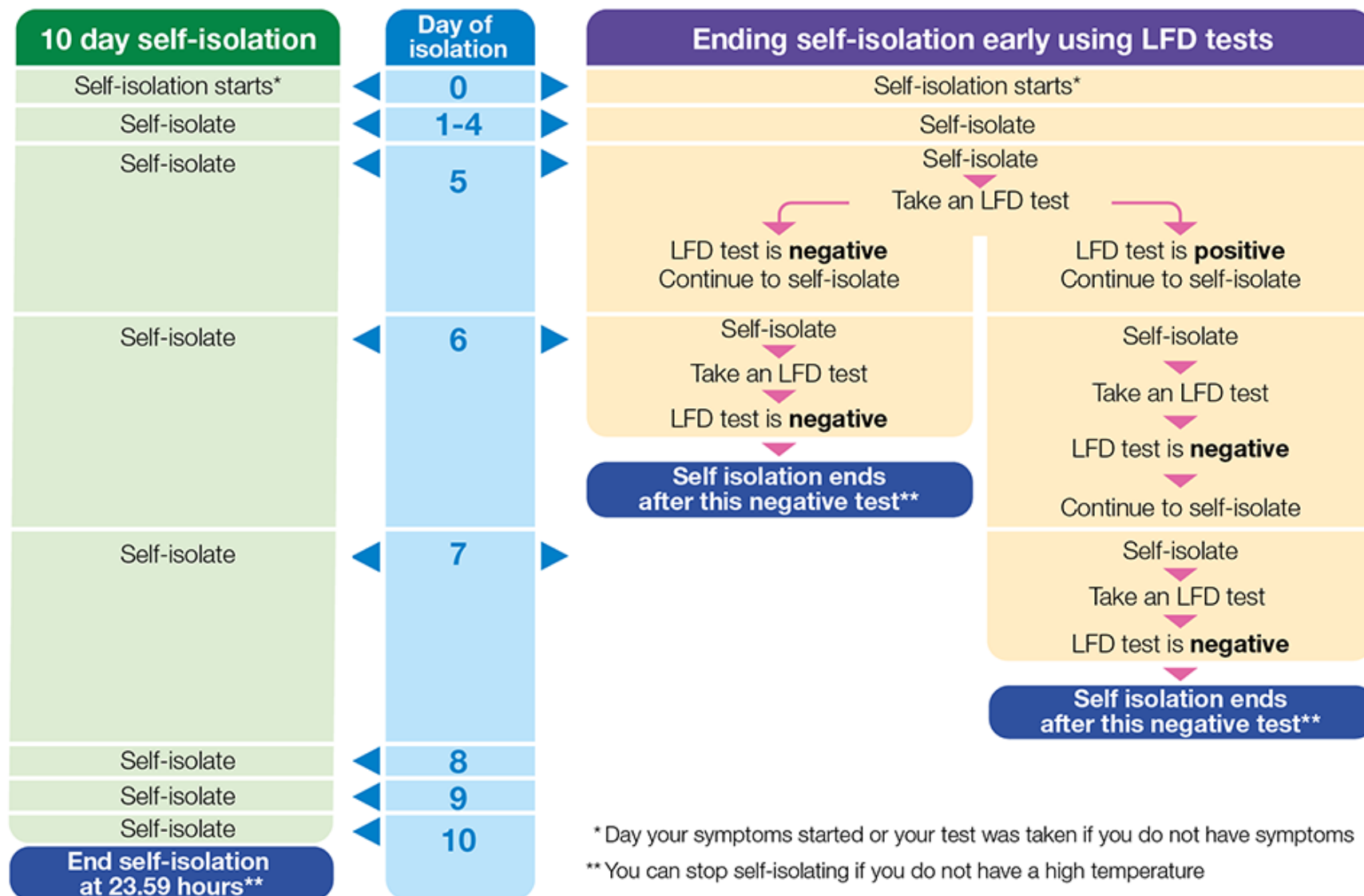
Individuals who test positive for Covid-19 should immediately self-isolate for 10 days, in line with the following national guidance: [Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

Individuals may be able to end their self-isolation period before the end of the 10 full days. Individuals can take an LFD test from 5 days after the day their symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms), and another LFD test on the following day. If both these test results are negative, and they do not have a high temperature, individuals may return to school.

Individuals must report their LFD test results after taking each test. Individuals should not take an LFD test before the fifth day of their self-isolation period, and they should only end their self-isolation after they have had 2 negative LFD tests taken on consecutive days. Individuals should stop testing after they have had 2 consecutive negative test results.

This guidance also applies to children and young people who usually attend an education or childcare setting.

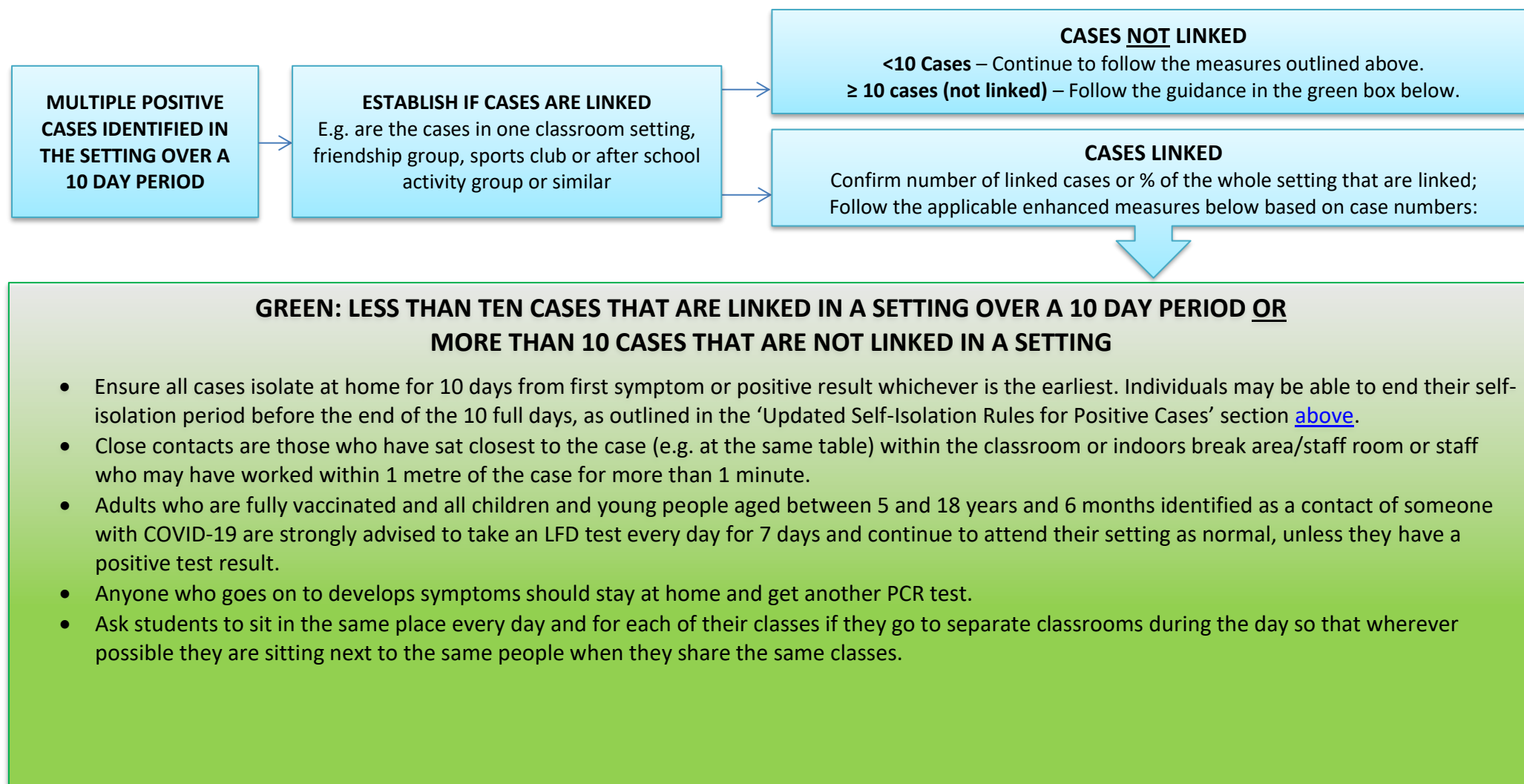
Examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result



ENHANCED MEASURES FOR MULTIPLE CASES

Please note that the following measures apply to all settings except SEND and boarding settings, who should contact Lincolnshire Health Protection Team for immediate support if 2 or more cases are identified.

Considering the increased case rates in Lincolnshire, and the reduced severity of the Omicron variant, the Director of Public Health for Lincolnshire has revised the thresholds for reporting and consideration of enhanced measures in schools; please see the charts below for further information. This approach is supported by the increased vaccination coverage across Lincolnshire, bolstered by the updated guidance for all close contacts of a positive case to take an LFD test every day for 7 days, subject to certain criteria.



YELLOW: 10 – 30 CASES THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OR 20% OF THE WHOLE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD

In addition to previous measures:

If you haven't already, get in touch with Public Health at Lincolnshire County Council (healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

- **If cases are linked across classroom settings:**

- Increase cleaning of common touch points such as toilets etc.
- Where possible keep students within the same classroom setting (primary school) to reduce mixing with other classes.
- Where possible ensure students sit next to the same students in all classes including form and other subject classes (secondary school).
- Where possible arrange seating so that students are sitting in pairs, facing one direction only and sit next to the same student.
- Explore other potential areas of mixing and, where possible, introduce measures to prevent as much mixing as possible e.g., virtual assemblies.

- **If cases are linked within one classroom setting:**

- Any close contacts with symptoms should take a PCR test, unless already testing positive on an LFD test. There is no need for a confirmatory PCR test as per the [current guidance](#). If they test positive, follow current [self-isolation guidelines](#).
- Recommend all students within the classroom setting to complete 7 days of LFD testing, as per the close contact testing.
- Where possible, restrict all mixing between this class and other classes, including at break times.
- Where possible, restrict the affected class to one toilet block and increase cleaning.
- Where possible, create additional space between tables, ask students to sit in pairs and facing forwards; keep to the same seating arrangements.
- For an agreed temporary period, consider restricting school trips or outings, open days or performances for this class or ask students/staff to provide a negative LFD beforehand particularly those which may be more risk such as indoor sports or singing clubs.
- For an agreed temporary period, consider restricting access to after school clubs or activities.
- Consider carrying out twice weekly on site LFD testing for this one class for a period of two weeks (secondary school).
- Consider one off enhanced cleaning.

- **For cases linked within the same friendship/sporting/after school group**

- Any close contacts with symptoms should take a PCR test, unless already testing positive on an LFD test. There is no need for a confirmatory PCR test as per the [current guidance](#). If they test positive, follow current [self-isolation guidelines](#).
- Close contacts with no symptoms should complete 7 days of LFD testing, as per the close contact testing.
- For indoor sports activities or singing clubs consider recommending the whole team to complete 7 days of LFD testing, as per the close contact testing.

If appropriate, the Director of Public Health in Lincolnshire may implement other testing measures.

AMBER: 31 – 60 CASES THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OR 30% OF THE WHOLE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD

At this stage an outbreak control meeting may be considered for discussions regarding potential measures. This would involve the school, Lincolnshire Health Protection Team, UKHSA and DfE (if required). In addition to previous measures in Green and Yellow above, additional measures could include:

- **If cases are linked across classroom settings:**
 - Recommendation for testing across the affected classrooms
 - Restricting mixing between affected classroom settings and other classes
 - Recommend twice weekly on-site LFD testing for a limited period of time (secondary schools)
 - Staggering break and lunch times to reduce mixing with other classes
- **If cases are linked within one classroom setting:**
 - Consider whole class on-site supervised testing (surge testing)
- **If cases are linked within one friendship group/sports club:**
 - Consider whole group/club testing
 - Consider temporary suspension of club/activity for two weeks in the first instance

RED: 61+ CASES THAT ARE LINKED IN THE SETTING OR 40% OR MORE OF THE WHOLE SETTING OVER A 10 DAY PERIOD

At this stage an outbreak control meeting will likely be called for discussions regarding potential additional measures. This would involve the school, Lincolnshire Health Protection Team, UKHSA and DfE (if required). In addition to previous measure in Green, Yellow, and Amber above, additional measures could include:

- Recommence twice weekly on-site LFD testing for a limited period of time (secondary schools).
- Consider on-site supervised testing across the whole setting (surge testing).
- Recommend restriction of trips, open days or performances.
- Recommend restricted access to school premises for after school clubs or activities.
- Recommend restriction on external visitors, including parents (unless for safeguarding reasons)

If appropriate, the Director of Public Health in Lincolnshire may implement other more stringent measures (such as the reintroduction of face coverings and onsite PCR testing).

HOW TO ESTABLISH WHETHER CASES ARE LINKED WITHIN YOUR SETTING

The Lincolnshire Health Protection Team can help with this process so please get in touch with us via healthprotectionteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk if you have any questions or concerns.

- The following would not be considered as linked within a setting:
 - Positive siblings or staff/students from the same family (though note that this should not be ignored/ discounted if there is a wider outbreak as it may be a potential route of transmission across classes/year groups).
 - Students or staff who have tested positive but who have not been to school for at least seven days before onset of symptoms or date of positive test (whichever is earliest).
 - Positive cases in different year groups or classes where there has been no close mixing between classes/year groups.
- The following examples would be considered as linked within the setting (not an exhaustive list):
 - Positive cases where cases have spent at least 1 minute less than 1 metre apart or at least 15 minutes 2 metres apart for example:
 - Sitting at the same table or mixing during class, break or lunch
 - Close 1:1 work with a student/teacher
 - Contact sports
 - Team indoor sports activity

DEALING WITH MULTIPLE CLUSTERS OF LINKED CASES WITHIN YOUR SETTING

In line with the Contingency Framework, focus has shifted to a more targeted approach of implementing enhanced precautions where cases are linked within education settings via close mixing, instead of the broad-stroke measures such as immediate closure of a bubble or year group.

It is possible therefore that settings may experience two or more clusters of linked cases, which when dealt with separately may or may not meet the thresholds for enhanced measures. The identification of separate clusters is an important part of the clinical risk assessment, and the Health Protection Team will support you to establish whether clusters of cases are linked.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

In the event that Amber or Red mitigation measures need to be implemented, the Health Protection Team may provide additional supportive resources, which will be determined on a case by case basis and may include:

- Letter to Parents/ Carers from the Director of Public Health (DPH) to support PCR testing of close contacts;
- Letter to Parents/ Carers from the DPH to support 7-day LFD testing of close contacts;
- Deployment of DPH resources to support on-site/ surge testing;
- Regular monitoring and review of case numbers with HPT clinicians;
- Dedicated out-of-hours contact point for urgent enquiries, such as situations where service provision may be impacted due to loss of staff, or if considering stopping face-to-face teaching for parts/ all of the setting.