



Update – All Staff and Students

23 May 2022

On Tuesday 29 March, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Sajid Javid, set out the [next steps for living with Covid-19](#) in England. As we [learn to live](#) with COVID-19, there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and passing it on to others. These actions will also help to reduce the spread of other respiratory infections, such as flu, which can spread easily and may cause serious illness in some people.

Actions for us all

1. **Get vaccinated** - If you are eligible and you have not yet received your full course of a COVID-19 vaccine, you should [get vaccinated](#). A full course of a COVID-19 vaccine provides protection against severe disease, including against the Omicron variant, but this protection wears off over time. Booster doses significantly improve the protection offered by vaccines. You should get a booster vaccine for COVID-19 if you are offered one.
2. **Let fresh air in** - The amount of respiratory virus in the air can build up in poorly ventilated areas. Bringing fresh air into a room by opening a door or a window, even for a few minutes at a time, helps remove older stale air that could contain virus particles and reduces the chance of spreading infections. Keep classrooms and workspaces well ventilated but make sure that fire doors are closed when rooms are not occupied.
3. **Remember the basics of good hygiene** - Following these basic rules of good hygiene will help to protect you and others from COVID-19 as well as many other common infections:
 - cover your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze – catch it, bin it, kill it
 - wash or sanitise your hands frequently and thoroughly
 - clean your work areas before use.
4. **Consider when to wear a face covering** - Face coverings will not normally be expected to be worn in education settings. However, wearing a face covering is a matter of personal choice and is permitted whilst at college. Consider wearing a face covering:
 - when you are coming into close contact with someone at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell from COVID-19 or other respiratory infections
 - when COVID-19 rates are high and you will be in close contact with other people, such as in crowded and enclosed spaces
 - when there are a lot of respiratory viruses circulating, such as in winter, and you will be in close contact with other people in crowded and enclosed spaces.

Guidance for people with symptoms of respiratory infections, including COVID-19

The [symptoms of COVID-19 and other respiratory illness are very similar](#). It is not possible to tell if you have COVID-19, flu or another respiratory infection based on symptoms alone. Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

In some cases, you might continue to have a cough or feel tired after your other symptoms have improved, but this does not mean that you are still infectious.

Guidance for staff and students aged 19 and over

Free PCR and LFD tests are no longer available for most people, so you are unlikely to know whether you have COVID-19. If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection and you do not feel well enough to work or you have a high temperature then stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until you no longer have a high temperature (if you had one) or until you no longer feel unwell. For staff who have a high temperature or milder symptoms and feel well enough to work, then talk to your line manager about working from home (WFH). If you are unable to WFH, talk to your manager about options available to you. If you come to work with mild symptoms the following actions will reduce the chance of passing on your infection to others:

- wearing a well-fitting face covering made with multiple layers or a surgical face mask
- avoiding crowded places such as public transport, large gatherings, or anywhere that is poorly ventilated
- remembering the basics of good hygiene.

If you have a positive COVID-19 test result, because you have been tested for a specific reason, you must stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days after the day you took your test. The severity of your symptoms will determine whether you feel able to work/study from home or whether you are too ill to work/study from home. If you are unable to work/study from home then your absence will be logged as per our usual and normal processes. Staff absence as a result of a positive COVID-19 test or symptoms will now be recorded in the same way as any other sickness absence and will be on your sickness record. This will apply to all COVID-19 related sickness absence commencing 1 June 2022 onwards whether this is confirmed through a positive test result or as a result of an individual displaying symptoms.

Guidance for students under 19

Children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people, where they can. They can come back to college when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend. Children and young people with mild symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, or slight cough, who are otherwise well, can continue to attend college. Children

and young people aged 18 years and under who have a positive test result must stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 3 days after the day they took the test.

Guidance for people previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV)

You may previously have received a letter or email [identifying you as someone who is CEV](#), and you may have been advised to shield during earlier stages of the pandemic. For most people who were CEV, you are no longer at substantially greater risk than the general population, and you are advised to follow the same guidance as everyone else on staying safe, as well as any further advice you may have received from your doctor. There remains a smaller number of people who, in spite of vaccination, are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Most people with immunosuppression will be under the care of a hospital specialist and will usually have been identified either through being eligible for a third primary dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or spring booster or as eligible for new treatments for COVID-19. If you have been identified as being at higher risk then please talk to your manager or tutor who will work through an individual risk assessment with you, supported by HR or Health and Safety colleagues as appropriate.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Janet Meenaghan
Principal, Stamford College
CEO Inspire Education Group



Rachel Nicholls
Principal, Peterborough College
Deputy CEO Inspire Education Group



Peterborough
College



Stamford
College



University Centre
Peterborough

Inspire Education Group