

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Guidance on reducing the risks from COVID-19 in schools

Annex D

Supplementary guidance for residential boarding/hostel accommodation in educational facilities

This guidance was developed in consultation with regulatory bodies, members of the Scottish Council of Independent Schools, local authority school residence providers, the Boarding Schools' Association, Public Health Scotland and other key partners. **This update is issued in August 2021, in preparation for the return to school after the summer holidays.**

Establishments may also find the existing Scottish Government [guidance for residential children's houses, residential schools and secure care facilities on staffing, social distancing and self-isolation](#) useful. This guidance is updated regularly. They should also be familiar with guidance on [symptoms of coronavirus](#).

1. Application

All schools, including residential boarding/hostel accommodation in educational facilities, should have regard to the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Guidance on reducing the risks in schools](#) (updated 3rd August 2021) and apply it as appropriate in their specific settings.

This supplementary guidance is for school care accommodation services, provided to allow pupils to safely attend a public, independent or grant-aided school, that provides residential accommodation. For clarity, this includes: residential, special and secure accommodation and independent boarding school facilities and residence halls provided by local authority secondary schools.

2. Return of pupils

Pupils are currently expected to have full-time, in-school learning.

A common travel area (CTA) exists between the UK (including Northern Ireland), Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands or the Isle of Man. Specific considerations apply for pupils from outside the Common Travel Area who need to comply with all existing travel restrictions on return to school in August 2021. Please see the section on 'International Arrivals' below.

Regular reviews of these arrangements will continue, taking into account the latest evidence about new variants and progress in reducing community transmission levels. New arrangements will be communicated at the earliest opportunity.

3. Risk assessments

Establishments should undertake and update regularly their own specific risk assessment, considering local circumstances, the domestic arrangements of pupils and staff, travel requirements, pupil wellbeing and public health and hygiene requirements.

The assessment should consider the overall number of pupils, staffing levels, the capacity of each residential hall or house including arrangements for the provision of meals, the mix of shared dormitories and bathrooms/toilets, individual bedroom facilities, and shared communal facilities including enhanced cleaning schedules, particularly for kitchens and bathrooms and measures to reduce contact between pupils, staff and visitors to and staff in the facility. Risk

assessments should include contingency provision for symptomatic pupils or staff, those with underlying health conditions, and possibly, catering, external pastoral support, and the use of school and public transport.

Schools should inform the Care Inspectorate of any revisions to term dates, or if young people are required to remain at school over holiday periods, due to risk assessment outcomes.

4. Wellbeing

Residential schools have a responsibility to ensure the overall wellbeing of children and young people and compliance with practices which reduce the risk of the spread of infectious disease. Establishments should therefore make appropriate arrangements for children and young people who are in school to be active, creative and nurtured, much as they would be able to do if they were in a home family setting, whilst adhering to public health guidance and following all other Scottish Government and relevant governing body guidance.

Where pupils must leave the boarding /residential facility (for example for weekend leave or during half term), they can designate a host family to stay with in Scotland. These designated host families, or guardians, are seen to be the extended household for these young people, in the absence of being able to stay with their own family due to travel restrictions, or other barriers.

If schools are looking for alternative opportunities for educational pupil activity, (pupils are unable to leave the school accommodation, but are not self-isolating), they should follow the current [guidance on school visits](#). The guidance also provides for day and residential visits, subject to specific restrictions.

Where pupils are permitted to leave the school premises for non-educational/social purposes e.g. during free time or at lunch time, pupils should follow the rules for wider society and rules on group sizes.

5. Hand hygiene

Boarding facilities should provide appropriate hand hygiene facilities (e.g. hand sanitiser) in common spaces and support and encourage regular hand hygiene at the appropriate times. Bathrooms should be fully supplied with products for handwashing and drying, and subject to enhanced cleaning.

6. Contact between individuals and groups

In planning to support boarding pupils, schools should apply the guidance on contact between individuals and groups as set out in the [main school guidance](#), for example observing appropriate physical distancing between adults and children/young people and other mitigations.

This guidance has recently removed the requirement for bubbles in schools from 9 August 2021, however boarding schools should still take into account that increased mixing of pupils in a residential environment can lead to increased transmission, and a greater the risk that more children would need to isolate if there is a positive case. So a form of bubbling may still be appropriate by some schools. Schools should continue to risk assess, following the the main guidance, considering for example the arrangements for distancing between adults and children and maintain contact with their local Health Protection Team. Schools should have contingency plans for pupils or groups of pupils that may be required to isolate following a positive case.

. Risk assessments should fully consider procedures for when children and young people leave and return to school premises, including hand hygiene.

7. Staying vigilant and responding to COVID-19 symptoms

Daily symptom surveillance (asking the questions) with low threshold for isolation and testing if symptomatic, is key.

Residential pupils showing [symptoms of COVID-19](#) will require to be isolated and tested using a PCR test arranged via [NHS Inform](#), not a lateral flow device. If a child in a boarding school/residence hall shows symptoms, they should initially self-isolate in their residential setting/household. Most children will benefit from self-isolating in their boarding house so that their usual support can continue. Others will benefit more from self-isolating in their family home if travel can be arranged safely.

Students should not travel to the school if showing symptoms, instead they should isolate and arrange a PCR test via NHS Inform.

Any person showing symptoms should not rely on lateral flow device results and should always book a PCR test.

8. Surveillance, testing and outbreak management

Schools should follow procedures for testing, Test and Protect and outbreak management main school guidance.

On surveillance, the overall reporting on incidence amongst school age children and staff will include data from these settings.

It is recommended that the relationship between the residential house/school and the local Health Protection Team is proactive and established as early as possible and regularised. This will enable working relationships to be continuous and possible future scenarios to be rehearsed.

9. Isolation and international arrivals

This guidance applies to students travelling to attend a boarding school in Scotland who meet the UK entry requirements and have travelled from outside the CTA (see 2 above). These people are referred to as 'boarding school students' in this guide.

A country risk assessment system of red, amber and green lists is in place.

For boarding school students travelling from green list countries, who have not been through an amber or red list country in the previous 10 days, no isolation period is required.

Boarding school students who have travelled from or through a red list country in the previous 10 days must isolate at their boarding school accommodation for 10 days.

Although the requirement for isolation for travellers who are under 18 years of age and ordinarily resident in the UK, EU or US (and certain other [countries](#)), or are fully vaccinated, and who have travelled from or through an amber list country has been relaxed more generally, it is still considered that the specific circumstances of a large number of international arrivals joining a boarding school environment, given the close contact pupils and staff live in and the risks of virus transmission if a case does occur, present a higher degree of risk and require specific mitigations.

Boarding school students who have travelled from or through amber list countries are therefore advised to isolate until a negative Day 2 PCR test is received. Also see Section 14.

Not fully vaccinated, over 18 Boarding school pupils who have travelled from or through amber list countries should follow the general [isolation requirements](#) for not fully vaccinated adults—i.e. 10 day isolation period (which can take place at the boarding school in accordance with this guidance) and tests on day 2 and day 8.

Arrangements and mitigations to apply to isolating pupils are set out below. Specific provision is made below regarding formation of support bubbles for isolating pupils. There should be no mixing at all between isolating and non-isolating pupils.

Anyone who is not a British or Irish national, or who does not have the right to reside in the UK (e.g. through a [child student visa](#)), who has travelled from or through an acute risk 'red list' country in the previous 10 days, is not permitted to enter the UK and should be told not to travel.

Regular reviews of these arrangements will be undertaken.

10. The International Travel Regulations

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (International Travel) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 contain the requirement to check into managed self-isolation for all international travellers (subject to exemptions) from outside the CTA who have departed from or transited through an acute risk 'red list' country. Passengers to whom this requirement applies may only enter Scotland at one of Aberdeen, Edinburgh or Glasgow Airports, or a military airfield or port. All such travellers are required to travel directly to managed self-isolation accommodation using designated transport and to remain in that accommodation for a minimum 10 day period.

These Regulations also contain provisions requiring all travellers (subject to exemptions), who have been outside the Common Travel Area in the 10 days prior to arrival in Scotland, to book and undertake tests for the detection of Coronavirus (COVID-19) following their arrival in Scotland. Travellers from red list and amber list countries are required to book and undertake two tests whereas travellers from green list countries or amber list countries (where they are fully vaccinated or under 18 and ordinarily resident in the UK, EU or US) are only required to book and undertake one test. Children under 11 are not required to take the tests.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (International Travel) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 were amended on 27 March 2021 to provide that pupils travelling to boarding schools from outside the CTA having travelled from or through a red list country within the last 10 days are able to isolate in their boarding accommodation on arrival in Scotland. (Please see Section 13 for further detail.)

These Regulations are reviewed, with four nations decisions on changes to red, amber and green country lists every three weeks.

11. School regulation

As with all independent schools in Scotland, proprietors must ensure that the school they are responsible for does not become objectionable on any of the grounds listed in Section 99(1A) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which includes the obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people enrolled in the school.

Additionally, the proprietors of independent boarding schools must comply with the relevant legislation around the registration of their School Care Accommodation Service; such as the Health and Social Care Standards and the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland

(Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011. This includes, but is not limited to, the requirement to maintain an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff who are properly supervised.

This guidance on managed isolation should be considered alongside these requirements, and the main school guidance. Schools are expected to follow these arrangements in full. To support these arrangements, the Care Inspectorate may carry out additional short COVID-19 inspections of services who are supervising managed isolation of boarders. These would use the specially developed key question which was published in the [Quality framework](#) for mainstream boarding schools (p54-67).

12. Before travelling

Before pupils travel, schools need to have travel plans in place, including arrangements for the collection and transfer of students to the boarding facilities where they will isolate. These need to be fully explained to students and their parents before they travel, including the infection risks and policies that will be in place, and their consent confirmed.

All boarding pupils who arrive in Scotland from a red or amber list country (where they are not otherwise exempt) will be able to and required to isolate in their boarding accommodation.. Any accompanying adult who has travelled from or through a red list country in the previous 10 days and who is intending to stay in Scotland will be required to enter managed isolation, unless they are exempt. Guidance on international travel restrictions is available at [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): international travel and managed isolation \(quarantine\)](#).

Schools should send boarding school students from red list countries the following:

- A copy of the Scottish Government letter confirming that boarding school students are covered by an exception, this will be sent to all schools ahead of the start of term; and
- A letter from their school to the boarding school student meeting the requirements as set out in this guidance.

Boarding school students from red list countries should be ready to present both of these letters, and either a paper or electronic copy of the PLF (see below), to Border Force officials on arrival.

Before travelling, all boarding school students are encouraged to take a [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) test](#) and get a negative result during the 3 days before they travel. It should be noted that this is also currently a mandatory requirement for any students aged over 18 or aged 11 and over and accompanied by an adult.

Before travelling, all boarding school students, or persons with responsibility for them, should:

- Book and pay for a travel test package for pupils aged 11 or over, which will include coronavirus (COVID-19) tests to be taken on Day 2 and Day 8 of their quarantine (only Day 2 for pupils from green and, in most cases, amber list countries);
- Complete a passenger locator form (PLF) before arrival, with details of where they will quarantine, when they will arrive and the travel test package booking reference number.

If a travel test package has not been booked and paid for, or a PLF has not been completed, in relation to a boarding school student prior to the student's arrival in Scotland it will be the responsibility of the school to arrange the test package, or submit the PLF passenger locator form, on behalf of the student.

Boarding school students should book and pay for the appropriate travel test package. They must take a PCR coronavirus (COVID-19) test on or before Day 2 and a test on or after Day 8 (if

they have travelled from a red list country, or an amber list and are over 18 and not fully vaccinated) following their arrival in Scotland.

Boarding school students should use the booking portal to book their travel test package (this is administered by Corporate Travel Management (CTM)).

If arriving directly into Scotland, please book tests using the [Scottish CTM portal](#). If arriving into England and then transiting to Scotland, please book tests using the [English CTM portal](#).

13. Travel to boarding school

A boarding school student requiring to isolate at their boarding accommodation must travel directly to the school accommodation without undue delay.

Transport is expected to meet the following conditions:

- it should be a motor vehicle,
- it should not be public transport and it should be transport that has been pre-arranged by the school at which the student or pupil is due to attend as a student or pupil on their arrival in Scotland

There may be cases where in planning for the above requirements related to transportation these cannot be met. In such cases, the Scottish Government will need to be contacted well in advance of the student or pupil travelling, in order for advice on bespoke arrangements to be considered.

In planning pupils' journeys to school, these should be kept as simple as possible, minimising transport changes and, ideally, arriving directly into Scotland. UK Government regulations have been amended so that boarding pupils arriving into any airport in the UK are now able to travel onward to their relevant school.

All boarding school students arriving from a red or amber list country and isolating at their boarding school should be met at their port of entry by representatives of their boarding school and be transported directly to their boarding facility to isolate. Schools will be expected to take immediate responsibility for boarding pupils on arrival, transferring them straight into a regulated school environment.

The boarding school representative should ensure they are at the port of entry in good time to pick up the arriving boarding school student(s). If the representative has issues getting to the port of entry on time they should phone and advise Border Force officials at the relevant airport. This includes if there is a change in the school representative responsible for the student's pick up and transport after the school has issued its letter to the student.

The boarding school representative should have proof of identification with them.

When boarding school representatives have arrived at the port of entry and are ready to pick up the pupil, for arrivals from red list countries they should go to the 'Managed Quarantine' collection point in the arrivals hall and, once their identity has been confirmed, the pupil will be brought through to meet them.

The boarding school travel representative who is responsible for transport should ensure:

- Appropriate physical distancing (at least 2 metres) is maintained at all times.

- Children should wear face coverings (unless aged under 5 or otherwise exempt), with appropriate arrangements for disposal of temporary face coverings or storage of reusable face coverings and handwashing.
- Good hand hygiene is maintained by ensuring a plentiful supply of alcohol hand gel and use at the appropriate times.
- If more than one child is travelling and they are not part of the same family or other grouping, ensure the transport is of a size that will allow physical distancing, one person per row with mask on, with no-one immediately in front or behind, and ensure there is a seating plan with allocated seating.
- In coaches, three rows of seats should be allowed between students and the driver.
- Good ventilation within the vehicle through open windows or effective air conditioning.
- That transport does not stop at any services (including at request of passenger), unless in an emergency such as fire.
- Where a long journey necessitates toilet breaks, these stops should be pre-arranged with facilities that should be exclusively for the use of the travelling boarding school student(s) for the duration of the stop and can be cleaned afterwards before being used again (schools may want to make arrangements with other schools to use facilities if needed on route).
- The destination school is notified around 20 minutes prior to arrival so they can prepare for the arrival.
- Children disembark in a physically distanced manner and are transferred to the care of school staff.
- If more than one child has travelled, pass the seating plan to the school for test and trace purposes.
- Ensure an appropriate cleaning regime for the school transport, for example, as provided in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools](#)

On arrival at the school, a one-way system should be established along paths that take boarding school students to the household areas where they will quarantine. Aim to maintain 2 metre physical distancing when escorting pupils to appropriate areas. School staff facilitating arrival should wear a face covering and ensure hand hygiene is performed at the appropriate times. (Aprons and gloves are not routinely required). A clear system should handle the arrival of multiple boarding school students at once and ensure strict physical distancing. Support bubble arrangements, if applicable, should already have been designated and **students that are not in the same support bubble should be kept separate from other isolating students, and both groups should be kept separate from other students at all times.**

14. Isolation in school boarding facilities

Arrivals from red-list countries

Isolation for red list travelling boarding school pupils may take place in accommodation that comprises residential facilities organised by the boarding school in Scotland that the pupil is due to attend as a pupil or student on their arrival in Scotland. The accommodation should constitute separate accommodation meaning it must be accommodation that is physically self-contained.

In the interests of pupil wellbeing, pupils that are isolating should, where possible, be allocated to a support bubble. Parents and pupils should fully understand the arrangements that are proposed and understand the infection risk inherent in any bubble arrangement.

Support bubbles should be kept as small as possible and of no more than 5 pupils at most, to limit transmission risk, should this occur. Records should be kept of who is in each bubble, and any planned or unplanned deviation from the agreed bubbles, in order to assist with contact tracing should it be required.

Irrespective of a support bubble arrangement, isolation should, where possible, be undertaken in single rooms with private bathroom facilities. It is permissible, if necessary, for pupils in the same bubble to share a room or bathroom facilities, though single rooms are preferable.

Care should be taken in constructing bubbles, to ensure that areas of origin are drawn as narrowly as possible, for example a bubble of up to 5 may be formed where pupils have travelled from the same area. Any bubbles should look to be of similar age-range as far as possible, although an exception would be appropriate for siblings.

The support bubble (of a maximum of 5 pupils) should have access to a limited common area for social contact. This area should be for the use of a single bubble only. If it is necessary for multiple bubbles to access the same area, this must be managed to avoid any contact between bubbles and with enhanced cleaning of the area, paying particular attention to touch surfaces and equipment, between each bubble accessing the area.

Care should be taken to promote appropriate mitigations and hygiene within the bubble, for example, maintaining 2 metre distancing, as much as is practical. Each bubble should occupy part of the school site which is separated from the parts of the site used by other bubbles for isolation purposes and areas used by other staff and students. For example, bubbles may occupy separate buildings or parts of buildings. Movement around the school facility should be strictly minimised, with any care delivery requirements (deliveries of food, toiletries or other supplies) provided in the pupil's room rather than using communal spaces e.g. dining rooms or collection points.

In designating pupils to a support bubble, schools should consider:

- The importance to wellbeing of pupils having in-person support from another pupil(s), and take into account such factors as pupil age and gender;
- Limiting transmission risk by:
 - keeping support bubbles to no more than 5 pupils;
 - grouping together pupils who have already mixed, for example siblings or those who have travelled together; and
 - grouping together pupils who have travelled from or through the same area.

Arrivals from amber-list countries

The international travel regulations exempt those under 18s and ordinary resident in Scotland, the EU or the US (and certain other [countries](#)) or those over 18 and fully vaccinated, from isolation requirements on return from amber list countries.

Given the risk of transmission and prevalence of the virus and new variants, a short period of isolation is however advised for boarding school students travelling from amber list countries, to balance this risk with the educational and wellbeing needs of pupils. Those arriving from or who have travelled through amber list countries are therefore advised to isolate until their Day 2 PCR test result has returned negative. This short period of initial isolation should be undertaken under the same conditions to those required for red arrivals as described above, including transport arrangements, and with the detailed mitigations as described elsewhere in this guidance. It is recommended that isolation periods are undertaken at boarding school

accommodation, where greater infection control and support is available, although it is permissible for a boarding school student who has travelled from an amber but not a red list country to spend their isolation period at an alternative specified location, before travelling on to their boarding school. Schools will want to consider the individual circumstances of pupils. Once a negative test result after Day 2 is received, the student may commence in person teaching. However further mixing with other pupils, other than for teaching, is not appropriate. Instead schools are advised that those pupils should remain in smaller specific bubbles for all purposes other than teaching until Day 10 is reached with no symptoms. The size of these bubbles is for schools to determine, up to a maximum of 12 pupils. The larger the bubble size, the greater the number of pupils that would be affected if a pupil developed symptoms or tested positive.

Students are expected to remain on the boarding school premises (including grounds) until the end of Day 10 and they remain asymptomatic and have tested negative.

Boarding school pupils, travelling from or through an amber list country, who are over 18 and not fully vaccinated should follow the general [isolation requirements](#) for adults who are not fully vaccinated – i.e. 10 day isolation period (which can take place at the boarding school in accordance with this guidance) with mitigations as described elsewhere in this guidance.

15. Residential facilities used for quarantine

This section, and sections 16 and 17, apply to those students from red list countries required to quarantine, those pupils from amber list countries until they have received a negative Day 2 PCR result, and amber list arrivals who are over 18 and not fully vaccinated for their 10 day isolation period.

Schools should have regard to Section 3 of the [COVID-19: guidance for non-healthcare settings](#) for appropriate infection prevention and control measures.

Rooms should have individual ventilation systems (e.g. room or window fan coil units that do not recirculate to other parts of the building) or windows that open (safely) and ideally en-suite facilities. Schools should be aware of the [SG ventilation guidance](#) on getting fresh air into indoor spaces to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

Care should be taken to ensure that private rooms and common areas have appropriate ventilation that is not introducing risk into or out of the quarantining area. Opening windows at regular intervals is ideal.

The school should risk assess and put in place appropriate arrangements to bring meals and other essential commodities, such as toiletries, to the area where quarantine is occurring. Students should have their meals in their rooms and must not leave the facility to collect meals or sit in a shared dining facility. Social contact should be risk assessed, which might permit an occasional meal to be taken as a group within the bubble if felt beneficial for mental health.

The school should risk assess and put in place appropriate arrangements for cleaning rooms, changing bedding, handling laundry and disposing of waste (see further detail below).

Where there are no en-suite facilities, designate toilet and showering facilities to specific quarantining individuals or a specific support bubble and increase cleaning frequency within these. If any shared facilities are used by different bubbles, enhanced cleaning will be required. Ensure a system is in place to make sure cleaning is taking place in between different bubbles that are accessing the toilet and showering facilities, and that non-isolating pupils are not accessing the same toilet and showering facilities.

If pupil rooms do not have en-suite facilities or a hand wash sink in rooms then ensure alcohol based hand rub provided for pupils to use before and after meals etc., and before or after leaving their room for any reason.

All boarding school students should have their own individual towels, both for drying after bathing or showering and for hand-hygiene purposes.

16. Supervising and supporting boarding school students during quarantine

Schools should ensure that pupils isolating are in a regulated school environment and under full time supervision by staff, especially when away from their quarantine accommodation, for example, for exercise or fresh air.

Schools should provide appropriate information to boarding school students about how they need to behave while in quarantine and how they will access services and can contact staff when help is required.

Schools should:

- Ensure boarding school students follow the guidance on how to quarantine when they arrive in Scotland.
- Ensure boarding school students are supervised such that there is no opportunity to leave their accommodation, except where carefully supervised to ensure no contact with other individuals, apart from others isolating as part of the same bubble and staff responsible for their supervision and care.
- Put in place arrangements for the oversight of boarding school students in isolation that protect the safety and welfare of all students and staff, minimising the school staff who interact with the boarding school students within reason and using COVID precautions (including 2 metre distancing, face coverings, symptom vigilance and hand hygiene) and following [NHS guidance](#) for people who are self-isolating.
- The mental wellbeing of pupils remains a priority. Where contact is required to support wellbeing this should be undertaken with as much care as possible to the infection prevention measures identified in this guidance.
- Provide boarding school students with clear rules (based on this guidance) as to what is expected and acceptable during their isolation period including a clear statement of the area that the boarding school students are allowed to occupy (e.g. an area including their room and toilet/bathroom facilities that are for their use only).
- Provide boarding school students with as much information as will be helpful for them to understand the practicalities of being in isolation such as arrangements for meals, room cleaning, disposing of rubbish, laundry, process for requesting and enjoying outdoor exercise and emergency procedures. Rules and information should be provided verbally and in writing.
- Alcohol-based hand rub for each boarding school student, with advice on how and when to use these and the risk of ingestion and flammability.
- Have procedures in place, agreed in advance with parents, setting out what it will do in the case of an emergency.

17. Laundry and waste disposal

The school should put in place appropriate arrangements for the collection and treatment of laundry and waste from each quarantining individual/bubble. This should prevent unnecessary contact between staff and members of the bubble.

- Staff should wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (face coverings, aprons and gloves etc.) when handling laundry from quarantining boarding school students. Laundry should be treated as infectious and double bagged, should be tagged with the care area and date, and stored in a designated, safe lockable area while awaiting laundering. It must be washed on a hot wash at 60°C.
- Laundry belonging to the isolating pupils should be handled and managed separately from laundry belonging to all other pupils in the school.
- Unless the pupil becomes positive for COVID-19, all consumable waste items that have been in contact with quarantining boarding school students, including used tissues, can be disposed of according to normal arrangements.

If a pupil is positive for COVID-19, all waste items should be put in a plastic rubbish bag, double bagged and tied. This should be disposed of with normal household rubbish after a wait of 72 hours.¹

18. Staff personal protective equipment (PPE)

Staff need not wear any PPE unless they are providing care for a symptomatic or confirmed positive COVID-19 student. At all other times, including in the quarantine accommodation when the pupil is not present and in areas only accessed by other staff members, a face covering should be worn and physical distancing applied. If caring for a symptomatic student (within 2 metres), staff should wear a fluid resistant surgical mask, eye protection, apron and gloves. These items are single use and must be disposed of after the care task being provided is complete. Staff must never go between students in PPE or wear PPE moving around the school setting. Donning and doffing training/instruction should be provided to staff.

19. Exercise and fresh air

All isolating boarding school students may leave the place in which they are isolating for exercise only under supervision, which should be by the same staff members caring for that bubble or individual. This must be within the school grounds. Regular opportunities for exercise and fresh air are recommended, and pupils in the same support bubble can access this together. Individuals from different bubbles must not mix even if outside and physically distanced. School staff should ensure that boarding school students remain in close proximity of their accommodation. Students should wear face coverings.

It is acceptable for the exercise to be sport related if it is in the school grounds and in close proximity to the quarantine accommodation, it has been risk assessed, pupils continue to wear masks/observe 2 metre distance and any games equipment used can be cleaned effectively after use.

20. Testing boarding school students

Boarding school students arrive on Day 0 and PCR testing must take place on or before day 2 and on or after day 8 for red list arrivals (and amber list arrivals over 18 and not fully vaccinated). Students who have arrived from green or amber list countries must complete PCR testing on or before Day 2.

Students who have arrived from amber list countries are also expected to undertake additional testing as follows. They should take an additional PCR test between days 5 and 8 (inclusive).

¹ See [HPS Guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)

This should also be complemented with regular LFD testing (with confirmatory PCR if positive) through the wider programme of testing in schools as detailed in the main schools guidance (e.g. twice weekly) until Day 10 and beyond (release at 10 days still retains some degree of risk of infection manifesting), to optimize the chance of detecting an outbreak quickly.

Schools should be able to request the additional PCR tests for amber list arrivals by ordering home test kits from NHS Inform and specifying that pupils have been asked to do this by their school and are students in Scotland. Schools and pupils can work through the menus, confirming they do not have symptoms of Covid-19 and are not an essential worker. When asked why they are getting a test, they should select that they have been told to get a test by their place of education and that they are a student in Scotland. They can then proceed to order a home test kit using a mobile phone number and email address.

School staff should ensure test kits are stored appropriately (ensuring storage is at an appropriate temperature: 5°C to 22°C). Schools should have a plan setting out which boarding school student will receive test kits on which day.

When required, school staff should collect test kits from storage and deliver them to boarding school students within their 'household' accommodation. After students have completed the test, school staff should collect the test kit and put it into a box which should be closed and sealed for transport. They should not handle the test kit further before collection when they should be passed to the courier.

Boarding school students should normally complete the test themselves, following the instructions. School staff should familiarise themselves with test-kit instructions so that they can provide appropriate support for boarding school students where necessary. Where the pupil is aged under 16, the mobile phone number entered on the test needs to be for a staff member who is authorised to speak on behalf of the pupil and answer questions in relation to contact tracing, as a parent would in the case of a child aged under 16 outside of the boarding school environment. The pupil and/or their parent's consent should be secured for this.

PCR test results will be sent by SMS to the mobile phone number used and any positive results will result in follow up contact by NHS Test and Protect.

In general, any child who has been a case of COVID in the past 90 days is exempt from non-statutory testing unless COVID symptoms develop since a positive result may simply be evidence of remnant viral RNA and not an indication of recent infection and tests become very difficult to interpret. However any concerns in this regard should be referred to a clinician if symptoms arise to indicate re-infection which is, of itself, rare.

21. Visitors to boarding school students in quarantine

Boarding school students in isolation should not receive visitors, except in exceptional circumstances. If it is necessary for social workers, other children's social care staff, medical staff or other professionals to engage with a child, they should consider in the first instance if this can be done so remotely. Where face to face care/consultation is required by any onsite nursing or medical staff, efforts should be made to see the pupil in their room and avoid the need for the pupil to leave their accommodation or enter the medical room.

22. Leaving isolation under exceptional circumstances

Boarding school students must not leave the place where they are isolating until their isolation has ended (see below), except on any of the grounds set out in [regulation 9\(6\) of the Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(International Travel\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#).

23. Ending Isolation

Any members of a bubble that have isolated together from red list countries should remain in isolation until all members have served 10 days quarantine, leaving quarantine on Day 11. Arrivals from amber list countries are advised to end isolation only when a negative Day 2 PCR test result is received, when a less restrictive isolation is expected to continue until after Day 10.

If any member of a bubble tests positive during that time, the boarding school student's whole bubble will be required to isolate for a further ten days (with the day after the test was taken counting as Day 1 of the additional quarantine).

If the result of a boarding school student's Day 8 test (Day 2 in the case of amber list) is inconclusive, the bubble should stay in quarantine until they take an additional test and receive a negative result, or 14 days have elapsed with no symptoms in any members of the bubble. The local Health Protection Team can help interpret what to do when non-standard results are received or when multiple / sequential positive results are received for the same bubble.

Once isolation is over, boarding school students are no longer required to meet the restrictions set out in this guidance. However, schools should continue to manage all boarding school students in line with the [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools](#).

24. Risk assessments and contingency plans

Schools will need to undertake their own risk assessments about how to quarantine boarding school students safely, taking particular account of the numbers of students quarantining at any one time and contingency arrangements for inconclusive or positive test results for individuals and bubbles. Particularly at the beginning of terms, careful planning will be required if high numbers of pupils require to isolate and to manage the risk of isolation periods being extended. To manage this risk, consideration should be given to staggering return dates and isolation periods, the possibility of postponing other pupils' return at short notice and identifying additional accommodation that could be used if required.

Schools should have regard to guidance on isolation for those showing symptoms of coronavirus in planning for the quarantine of arriving boarding school students. For example, fire safety risk assessments should be updated to consider the need for physical distancing on drill evacuations but this must not affect fire safety guidance, and risk assessments in completing emergency repairs and maintenance should consider the need for physical distancing. Schools are encouraged to make contact with their local public health teams in this regard.

Schools should set out clear contingency plans for pupils and staff becoming symptomatic/testing positive, including the risk that this could affect multiple bubbles and significantly extend isolation periods. Planning should include the option to extend use of quarantine accommodation if necessary, for example, by identifying alternative accommodation for other pupils who were due to move into it, or, if unavoidable, identifying alternative accommodation to move quarantining pupils to. A decision to move quarantining pupils should only be taken after full risk assessment, ensuring that the alternative accommodation can meet all the requirements of this guidance, that the movement of pupils and staff is conducted as safely as possible minimising any risk of infection transmission, and that the vacated accommodation receives enhanced cleaning prior to other staff or pupils using it.

25. School staff

Where possible, residential settings should operate a consistent staff rota to minimise the risk of transmission and keep the number of staff having contact with each individual or bubble to a minimum. The rota should avoid individual staff having contact with multiple isolating bubbles,

and should clearly designate staff during the isolation period as either looking after students in isolation or looking after non-isolating students and avoid any shared duties, for example, general school staff providing back up for staff supporting a quarantine bubble. Further mitigations should be considered, for example, separate groups of staff supervising pupils from red list countries.

If staff are having contact with more than one bubble then following all the mitigations is essential in order to minimise all routes of transmission (2 metre distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene before and after contact with students in the bubble). The school should have contingency plans in place for staff members testing positive or being required to isolate in the event of being identified as a close contact.

Contact with pupils by school management or pastoral staff should be fully risk assessed to minimise risk of transmission, for example, by ensuring that this contact is remote or during outdoor exercise periods, except where necessary to support individual pupils' wellbeing.

Staff, whether non-resident, visiting, or partially or fully resident at the school, should follow careful infection control measures during and after visits, in the same way as any self-isolating household would if they had unavoidable visitors. As always, they will need to pay particular attention to careful infection prevention and control, including physical distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene.

Schools should follow the procedures for staff testing, Test and Protect, and outbreak management as set out in this guide. Any staff member who develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), tests positive for COVID-19 through an asymptomatic test or has someone in their household who has developed symptoms, should cease working immediately, self-isolate and book a PCR test.

You should refer to the [Scottish COVID-19 Community Health and Care Settings Infection Prevention and Control Addendum](#) for guidance in relation to all engagement with students in quarantine. This includes arrangements where a child or young person showing symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) requires staff contact for personal care.

26. Outbreak Management

Any suspected cases (symptomatic or with a positive test result) should immediately be isolated from others within the bubble and not come into contact with others until the end of a further 10 day isolation or a negative PCR result.

Schools should have a contingency plan in place for this occurring in a specific setting, with a designated single room(s), toilet and non-shared facilities for the individual(s) affected. If the individual is already in a single en-suite room which can be isolated from their bubble, it may not be necessary to move them, but this should be risk assessed depending on the specific circumstances and options. There should be a cleaning plan for the area in which the suspected/confirmed case has been and cleaning of any shared facilities within the bubble.

Where a positive result is returned for any individual, contact tracing will be undertaken by NHS Test and Protect using the phone number provided on the test kit. To support with this, the list of school contacts should be gathered, both those within the bubble and those who the person has had contact with outside their bubble. The contact tracer will work with the individual and the school to identify all the relevant contacts and provide them with the appropriate advice.

All contacts of a positive case will be advised to isolate and undertake a further PCR test 3 to 5 days after the contact has occurred.

In addition, any positive test should be reported to the Health Protection Team (HPT) as soon as it is received. There is no need to report suspected cases i.e. those with symptoms only but no positive test.

Should two or more confirmed (PCR or LFD positive) cases of COVID-19 arise within 14 days, the local HPT may investigate further. The HPT will work with the school and any other relevant parties to undertake a risk assessment and put in place a shared plan to reduce any risk of onward transmission. The HPT will also work with contact tracers working through NHS Test and Protect to inform their plan of action.

27. Education

Where schools wish to commence the education of any isolating students, this may only be done where it would be consistent with the student maintaining their isolation (i.e. through remote learning).