

FAQs for Parents and Carers in Manchester

The following advice has been prepared with the help of our Public Health team in Manchester to give parents and carers as much information as possible before children return to school in September. Further information is also available on the Government website for parents/carers about what changes and measures to expect in schools in September:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Is it compulsory for my child to attend school from September?

Yes; from the start of the next academic year in September, it is compulsory for children of all school years to attend.

How safe will it be?

Our schools can provide a well managed environment, to reduce the risk of infection. Public Health England is clear that if settings do this, the risk of transmission will be lowered. These measures include:

- changes in pick up and drop off arrangements, improved signage and one-way movement systems;
- ensuring those who have coronavirus symptoms, or who have someone in their household who does, do not attend;
- washing hands more often than usual;
- promoting good hygiene around sneezing/ coughing into tissue, which is then put in bin;
- cleaning frequently touched surfaces;
- changes to classroom layout and timetables to reduce contact;
- regular deep-cleaning;
- grouping pupils in a 'bubble' designed to help with infection control.

How will my child travel to school?

Due to social distancing, the capacity of public transport and school bus services may be reduced. We would encourage alternative means of transport (walk, cycle, car), where possible, to ensure there are places on public transport for those children who have no other options.

What will a 'bubble' look like?

This very much depends on the school your child attends. The main priority is to reduce contact between people as much as possible. This will be achieved through pupils being placed in 'bubbles'. Some 'bubbles' may be as small as 30 whereas in larger primary schools or secondary schools, 'bubbles' may be a whole year group. To reduce contact between pupils:

- 'bubbles' may have different start and finish times;
- 'bubbles' may have break times and lunch times in separate areas of the school;
- school timetables may be adjusted.

How often will pupils wash their hands during the day?

Schools will be washing their hands as soon as pupils enter the school, at regular intervals throughout the day and before going home.

How safe is it to use bathrooms at school?

Schools will be taking additional steps to ensure bathrooms are kept clean, including:

- being cleaned at regular times throughout the day;
- being cleaned thoroughly each evening or before school and this will include cleaning specific 'touch points' throughout school e.g. door handles, light switches etc.

Will schools be using personal protective equipment (PPE)?

Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools is not recommended. PPE will only be used if a child, young person or other learner becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus whilst in their school and needs direct personal care until they can return home. Also, those children, young people and students whose care routinely already involves the use of PPE due to their intimate care needs, will continue to receive their care in the same way.

What would happen if somebody at school developed Covid symptoms during the day?

- If anyone shows symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, they will be taken to a designated room.
- Staff will wear PPE equipment if necessary to provide support.
- Parents/next of kin will be contacted and the person will be expected to be collected from school immediately and will be advised to follow '[stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus infection](#)'. They must self-isolate for at least 7 days and should [arrange to have a test](#) to see if they have coronavirus. Other members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 14 days from when the person showing symptoms first had symptoms.