

# Explore Learning Ltd COVID-19 Guidance – February 2022

Written in line with government guidance: '[Protective measures for for out-of-school settings](#)' and '[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings](#)'

This guidance explains the actions Explore Learning will take to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in their centres. We have updated in line with revised government and public health guidance.

**From 21/2/22:**

- **Twice weekly testing no longer advised for staff or secondary age children, face coverings are no longer required, but can be worn if personal preference, and positive cases are no longer required to be reported to Ofsted.**

**From 24/2/22:**

- **Contacts are no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests, contact tracing ended, out-of-school settings should follow the published UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) guidance.**
- **Staff with a weakened immune system should follow the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the UK Health Security Agency UKHSA advice for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk from Covid-19.**

**From 1/4/22: Free mass testing will end.**

Explore Learning will continue to monitor the current guidance for out of school settings & update parents and staff where needed and have in place further contingencies and measures in the event of an outbreak or new variant emergence.

**We have the following in place at all times:**

- Children and families are not accepted into the centre with a fever or are ill or infectious, as per our Infection Control Policy.
- Any child, staff member, parent or visitor with coronavirus symptoms or test positive are requested to not attend the centre.
- Cleaning of zones (including desks/keyboards/screens/headphones/mice), will happen twice a day. Anti-bacterial wipes are provided for cleaning areas and equipment.
- Hand sanitiser, soap, tissues and lined bins are freely available
- Regular hand washing with soap is encouraged for staff and children alongside the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' protocol
- Booked sessions allow capacity to be managed, and no large groups gathering in the old 'Surf Club' area
- The ventilation system will remain on in the centre and toilets when occupied.
- Plastic screens in reception remain in place
- Staff & children encouraged to bring water bottles to minimise use of water fountains
- All persons travelling outside the UK must adhere to instructions and testing in line with the government guidance.
- Explore Learning has a risk assessment that reflects the current Government Guidance

**When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test**

Children, staff and other adults should follow guidance on [People with COVID-19 and their contacts](#) if they have COVID-19 symptoms.

## **Social distancing**

Guidance no longer advises that providers limit parent/carer access to settings. Social distancing is no longer required.

Families should use their discretion on sharing lifts with other families, but Explore Learning recommends that maximum occupancy is one family at a time. Hand sanitiser is provided for the operation of lifts and we encourage the use of stairs wherever possible.

Sessions will continue to be pre booked, and where possible, children will work within the same small group with the same Tutor at each session, however, it is no longer necessary to keep children in consistent groups 'bubbles'.

## **Those who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable**

Following expert clinical advice and the successful rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, people previously considered to be particularly vulnerable, clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV), and high or higher-risk are not being advised to shield again. Children and young people who were previously identified as being in one of these groups, are advised to continue to follow [Guidance for people previously considered clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#). Children and young people over the age of 12 with a weakened immune system should follow [Guidance for people whose immune system means they are at higher risk from COVID-19](#).

Children and young people previously considered CEV can continue to attend out-of school settings should follow the same COVID-19 guidance as the rest of the population. In some circumstances, a child or young person may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

CEV staff and those who are pregnant should raise any concerns regarding returning to the workplace with their line manager. HR will conduct a risk assessment in line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations 1999 to ensure the working environment is safe for them.

## **Stepping measures up and down**

Settings will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is an outbreak in a setting or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

Explore Learning will issue revised outbreak management guidance to centres if local restrictions are reintroduced, or we are aware of a spike in infections within a local area. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education and childcare can have on children and young people, any measures in out-of-school settings should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

## **Safeguarding**

Staff recognise that the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak may have caused significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties for some children and they may be at increased risk of harm or abuse. Staff will ensure relevant training is up to date and the team are supported by a Designated Safeguarding Officer at all times to respond appropriately to child welfare concerns. Staff also recognise that some children may have found the long period at home hard to manage and / or developed anxieties related to the virus, and will provide opportunities for children and their families to talk about their experiences over the last few months and direct to support and advice where appropriate.

## **Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups**

There is emerging evidence that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals may be more severely affected than the general population by coronavirus (COVID-19). Explore staff will be especially sensitive to the needs and worries of BAME children and young people, parents and carers, and staff, and will consider if any additional measures or reasonable adjustments may need to be put in place to mitigate risk. Click [here](#) for more information