**Cumbria County Council Public Health Update**

**11 November 2021**

1. **Local enhanced COVID-19 guidance remains unchanged**

You will be aware that we currently have enhanced guidance in place for education settings in Cumbria. This is guidance provided by Colin Cox, Director of Public Health as part of local COVID-19 management arrangements and supplements both the national guidance and contingency plan.

When Directors of Public Health put enhanced guidance in place, it is good practice to formally review the arrangements every 2 weeks. Consultation has taken place this week with the Cumbria Primary Headteachers Association, Cumbria Association for Secondary Headteachers and members of the Education Planning Group. We have also taken into account feedback from Union representatives and the Outbreak Control Team.

**The consultation has concluded that the current enhanced guidance should remain in place unchanged, due to increased reporting of cases and outbreaks to the Education Outbreak Control Team over the past week.** The guidance will be reviewed again in two weeks’ time.

Reminder of current local enhanced guidance:

**Secondary School Pupils / Students**

If a pupil is a household contact of a positive case, it is recommended that they LFD test daily for 5 days.

* Day 1 of LFD testing is counted as the day following the onset of symptoms (or date of the positive test if no symptoms) in the first person within the household to test positive.
* If the LFD test result is negative, the pupil can attend the setting. If it is positive, they should get a PCR test and stay at home whilst they await the result
* If the pupil develops symptoms of COVID-19 at any point, regardless of any recent LFD result, they should get a PCR test and stay at home whilst they await the result.
* This advice applies to unvaccinated pupils and pupils who have received their vaccine within the past 14 days.
* Additional LFD testing may be recommended when there is evidence of in-setting transmission. The Education IPC team can advise you on this.

**Primary School Pupils**

If a pupil is a household contact of a positive case, the Head Teacher can advise daily LFD testing for five days (the same as described for secondary school pupils above). However, based on feedback from Primary School Headteachers, the following advice can also be given:

A pupil who is a household contact of a positive case can be asked to stay at home for 5 days and then get a PCR test on day 5.

* Day 1 is counted as the day following the onset of symptoms (or date of the positive test if no symptoms) in the first person within the household to test positive.
* If the PCR test on day 5 is negative, the pupil can attend the setting. If it is positive, they should stay at home and parents / carers should follow advice from NHS Test & Trace.
* If the pupil develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the 5 days (or at any point afterwards), they should get a PCR test straight away (do not wait until day 5).

**Children in Early Years Settings**

LFD testing is not recommended for children under the age of 5. Early years settings can advise the following:

* A child who is a household contact of a positive case can be asked to stay at home for 5 days
* Day 1 is counted as the day following the onset of symptoms (or date of the positive test if no symptoms) in the first person within the household to test positive.
* If the child develops symptoms of COVID-19 during the 5 days (or at any point afterwards), they should get a PCR test straight away

**All staff and volunteers in education settings**

If a member of staff or volunteer is a household contact of a positive case, it is recommended that they LFD test daily for at least 5 days (when there is evidence of insetting transmission, this may be extended to 10 days as an extra precaution).

* Day 1 of LFD testing is counted as the day following the onset of symptoms (or date of the positive test if no symptoms) in the first person within the household to test positive.
* If the LFD test result is negative, the staff member / volunteer can attend the setting. If it is positive, they should get a PCR test and stay at home whilst they await the result
* If the staff member / volunteer develops symptoms of COVID-19 at any point, regardless of any recent LFD result, they should get a PCR test and stay at home whilst they await the result.
1. **Viral fevers / high temperatures**

Some parents are reporting that they have been given medical advice that their child does not require a PCR test when they have a high temperature (as clinical assessment indicates it is being caused by a different type of viral infection, other than COVID-19).

There are some nasty bugs circulating at present that can leave children feeling unwell with symptoms such as a high temperature. However, the public health advice remains that any child showing symptoms of COVID-19 (a high temperature, continuous cough or change to / loss of sense of taste and smell) should have a PCR test to rule out possible infection with COVID-19 before returning to the setting. This is because rates of COVID-19 remain high in our communities.

Please contact the Education IPC team if you are concerned about any advice given and we can risk assess the situation. A Public Health Consultant will overrule previous advice if they feel a PCR test is required.

Any queries about this update, please contact the Cumbria County Council Public Health Team by emailing EducationIPC@cumbria.gov.uk