

Covid – 19 September Update

Testing and current public health guidance

The public health guidance is clear: testing children and young people for COVID-19 in education and childcare settings is not currently recommended, unless directed by a health professional. Most infectious diseases in education and childcare settings can be managed by following the advice in UKHSA's updated health protection in education and childcare settings guidance and encouraging students and staff to follow UKHSA's advice for those who have symptoms or test positive for COVID-19. The UKHSA's guidance is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-sets-out-how-to-live-safely-with-covid-19>

Vaccinations

We encourage all eligible groups to come forward for vaccinations when offered and we continue to work with NHS and UKHSA to get this message to all educational settings. Vaccines remain our best weapon against this virus. By getting vaccinated, children, young people and staff can increase their protection against COVID-19. Resources, including immunisation guidance are available for parents and young people, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-vaccination-programme>.

Face coverings

UKHSA's living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19 guidance, found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-sets-out-how-to-live-safely-with-covid-19>, is clear that those attending education or childcare settings will not normally be expected to wear a face covering. Education and childcare settings may consider seeking specialist advice from the relevant UKHSA Health Protection Team (HPT) if they are concerned or are experiencing higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to acute respiratory infection.

Risk assessments

Ark Victoria Academy will regularly review and update our risk assessments - treating them as 'living documents', as the circumstances in each setting and the public health advice changes. Ark Victoria Academy will now follow the public health guidance set out by UKHSA on managing COVID-19 in line with other infectious diseases.

Ark Victoria Academy will also refer to the Emergency Planning and Response guidance which sets out how education and childcare settings should plan for and deal with emergencies, including the possibility of future significant public health incidents.

We continue to reinforce the need to carry out risk assessments with the sector, most recently for example during the extreme weather.