



Here are all your burning questions answered about what to expect heading back to school during the Covid-19 era.

1. Does my child need to wear a mask?

All high school students, including those under 12 years of age, will have to wear a mask at school.

They can take the masks off when seated, or when they're social distancing.

Students in Years 3 to 6 will be strongly encouraged to wear them if social distancing isn't possible. The school has a limited supply of masks if needed.

Students with specific medical conditions or disabilities will be exempt.

2. What happens if my child has Covid-19 symptoms?

If your child has symptoms at home, they should avoid school and should get tested at their earliest convenience. If they start developing symptoms at school, they'll have access to free RAT from the school or given priority at testing clinics if the school uses its supply.

Parents and carers will need to collect their child immediately, collect the RAT and do the test at home.

3. What do I do if my child brings Covid-19 home? Does the whole household have to isolate?

If your child tests positive and is isolating at home, then household members will have to follow the close contact rules. This means if you've spent more than four hours in a house or other accommodation together you will need to isolate unless you've had Covid-19 in the past four weeks. If you start to develop symptoms, you'll need to get tested.

4. If my child tests positive, do they need a negative test result before being allowed back to school?

If your child tests positive, they will have to follow the government guidelines for positive cases. This means they don't require a negative test if they have completed the full seven days isolation period and they no longer have a fever, sore throat, runny nose, or a cough that is bad or getting worse, on the last day of isolation.

5. What if my child's teacher or classmate tests positive for Covid-19 and was infectious in the class? Does my child have to be tested or isolate?

Schools will inform students and parents if there is a positive case in the school, while keeping the specific information confidential. However, students will only be asked to monitor for symptoms and to stay home and get tested if unwell.

6. What happens if there's an outbreak of cases?

If there's more than one case, schools will work with the Public Health Unit over any requirements to shut.

A two-step precautionary clean will also take place at the school if that's the case. It is the "last resort" for a school to close.

7. What if my child is medically vulnerable?

Students who can't go to school for medical reasons will be supported by their schools, just like in the case of an extended medical absence and they can access learning from home resources.

Those who are immunosuppressed will continue to take advice from their doctor and can be incorporated into their individual health plans.

8. What are Covid-19 symptoms like in children?

In most cases the SARS-CoV-2 virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, which can include fever and cough, but also milder cases of pneumonia. Some children may require hospitalisation but severe complications in children are uncommon.

