

# Covid-19 Symptoms and Attending School

Taken from: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/if-your-child-has-symptoms.html> (21st September 2020)

## When to keep your child at home and phone your GP

Do not send your child to school or if any of the following is true.

Your child has:

- a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more
- any other [common symptoms of coronavirus](#) - a cough (any kind not just dry), loss or changed sense of taste or smell, or shortness of breath
- been in [close contact](#) with someone who has tested positive for coronavirus
- been living with someone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
- an existing breathing condition that has recently got worse

**The school will follow its procedure for dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 should any child or staff member present with any of the above symptoms.**

You will need to:

1. Isolate your child from other people - this means keeping them at home and completely avoiding contact with other people, as much as possible. [Read advice on self-isolation](#)
2. Phone your GP - they will advise you if your child needs a [coronavirus test](#).
3. Everyone that your child lives with should also [restrict their movements](#), at least until your child gets a diagnosis from their GP or a coronavirus test result. This means not going to school, childcare or work.
4. [Treat your child at home for their symptoms](#).

Your child should only leave your home to have a test or to see your GP.

Follow the advice on what to do if your child:

- [is given another diagnosis by your GP](#)
- [is not tested and is also not given another diagnosis from your GP](#)
- [tests positive for coronavirus](#)
- [tests negative for coronavirus](#)

## Other symptoms

If your child has symptoms such as **headaches** or a **sore throat**, keep them at home for **at least 48 hours**. These are not common symptoms of coronavirus, but they could be a sign of another infection. You and the rest of your family can continue your normal routine. You do not need to restrict your movements as long as you are not ill. Keep an eye on your child's symptoms for 48 hours. After 48 hours it's usually okay to send your child back to school or childcare as long as:

- their symptoms do not get worse
- they do not develop new symptoms
- they do not need paracetamol or ibuprofen during these 48-hours

[Read guidelines on what to do if your child has a runny nose or is sneezing](#)

**If a child or staff member presents with headaches or a sore throat, they will be taken out of the class straight away and will be sent home. As a precaution, the school will follow its procedure for dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19.**

## Diarrhoea

If your child has [diarrhoea](#), they should stay at home and not go to school until **they have not had diarrhoea for 48 hours**.

You and the rest of your family can continue your normal routine. You do not need to restrict your movements as long as you are not ill.

## Travel abroad

Your child will need to restrict their movements for 14 days if they have just returned from a country that is not on the ['green list'](#). This means they should stay at home and not go to school. They do not need to see a GP unless they develop symptoms.

Everyone they travelled with should also stay at home for 14 days once they return to Ireland.

[View the green list of countries on gov.ie.](#)

## Children who are close contacts of someone who has coronavirus

If your child has symptoms, follow the [advice on keeping your child at home - isolate your child, phone your GP, and restrict your movements](#).

If your child has no symptoms but has been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus, they should:

- [restrict their movements for 14 days](#) - this includes not going to school
- get tested for coronavirus - your GP can arrange this

They should do this even if they feel well. Household members, such as siblings, do not need to restrict their movements as long as the child has no symptoms.

Children who have no symptoms but have had close contact with a case will have 2 tests for coronavirus. This is because it can take up to 14 days for the virus to show up in your system after you have been exposed to it.

The second test will be 7 days after their last contact with the person who has coronavirus. If this is close to when they had their first test, they will only have 1 test.

[Read more about children and testing](#)

## When it's okay to send your child to school or childcare

As long as your child has not been in [close contact](#) with someone who has the virus, it's usually okay to send them to school or childcare if they:

- only have nasal symptoms, such as a runny nose or a sneeze
- do not have a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or more (as long as their temperature has not been lowered by taking any form of paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- do not have a new cough
- do not live with anyone who is unwell and may have coronavirus
- have been told by a GP that their illness is caused by something else, that is not coronavirus. Your GP will tell you when they can return to school or childcare.
- have got a [not detected \('negative'\) coronavirus test result](#) and have not had symptoms for 48 hours
- have not had diarrhoea for 48 hours
- have not had headaches or a sore throat for at least 24 hours

Children who are close contacts of someone who has coronavirus should [follow the advice to restrict their movements](#).

Your child does not need a GP medical certification or a note from a GP to return to school. But their school may ask you to sign a form to say that your child is well enough to attend. This is called a [Return To Educational Facility Parental Declaration Form \(PDF, 1 page, 95KB\)](#).

## Runny nose or sneezing

You do not need to restrict your child's movements if the only symptoms they have are:

- a runny nose
- sneezing

They can continue to go to school or childcare if these are the only symptoms they have.

Most of the time, you do not need to phone your GP if a runny nose or sneezing are your child's only symptoms.

Talk to your pharmacist instead.

A runny nose or sneezing on their own are more likely to be symptoms of a cold or other viral infection.

[Compare symptoms of coronavirus, flu and cold](#)

[Read more about colds, coughs and viral infections in children](#)