



## **When it is OK to send your child to school or childcare?**

If your child has not been told by the HSE that they are a close contact, it is usually OK 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 [high temperature \(38 degrees Celsius or over\)](#)
- are not taking any form of paracetamol or ibuprofen that could hide a high temperature
- do not have a new cough
- do not live with anyone who has [symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- were told by a GP that it's OK to go back to school or childcare after being unwell
- got a [negative COVID-19 test result](#) and have not had any new symptoms for 48 hours
- have not had [diarrhoea](#) for 48 hours
- are being tested as part of a serial testing programme, but have no symptoms. For example, some children in direct provision centres
- are tested regularly because they are in a vulnerable group

If your child is also fully vaccinated against COVID-19, it is OK to send them to school or childcare if they:

- are a close contact of COVID-19 but have no symptoms
- live with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19

## **Runny nose or sneezing**

It's OK to send your child to school or childcare if a runny nose or sneezing are the only symptoms they have.

But if your child has a runny nose and feels unwell or is off form, they should stay at home.

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

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.

## [Follow the advice to prevent the spread of colds, coughs and viral infections in children](#)

If your child also has a [high temperature](#), loss of smell or taste, a cough or shortness of breath, follow the [advice for children with symptoms of COVID-19](#). In this case, you should:

- [isolate your child from other people](#)
- [get a COVID-19 PCR test for your child](#)
- [restrict your movements](#) if you are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19

## **If your child has tested positive for COVID-19**

If your child has tested positive for COVID-19, they should not return to school or childcare until both of these apply:

- they have not had a [high temperature](#) for 5 days
- it has been 10 days since they first developed symptoms

They do not need a negative test result to return to school or childcare.

If your child was tested for COVID-19 because they had symptoms, [they will usually only have one test](#).

[Read more about how long a child needs to isolate from other people](#)

## **If your GP diagnoses your child with something else**

Your child will not need a test for COVID-19 if they are diagnosed with something that is not COVID-19.

Your child can return to their normal activities as long as your GP has not told you to keep them at home.

You and anyone your child lives with will no longer need to [restrict your movements](#).