



## COVID Update

You have probably heard but the [Government have confirmed](#) that **from 16<sup>th</sup> August, there will be no need to self-isolate for fully vaccinated people**. Instead of self-isolating, those who are double jabbed (at least 14 days prior to contact with a positive case) and under 18s identified as close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases are advised to get a free PCR test as soon as possible.

As double jabbed people identified as close contacts are still at risk of being infected, people are advised to consider other precautions such as wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, and limit contact with other people, especially with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable. They will not be required to self-isolate while they wait for the results of the PCR test.

Anyone who tests positive following the PCR test will still be legally required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status or age in order to break onwards chains of transmission. Meanwhile anyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and get a PCR test, and remain in isolation until the result comes back.

### Under 18s

- Removing self-isolation for under 18s comes ahead of thousands of pupils and students returning to school and college for the autumn term, and is crucial step to reduce disruption to education and keep children in the classroom.
- In line with Step 4, 'bubbles' will end for all children under 18, social distancing will no longer be necessary, and schools will not need to stagger start and finish times. Two onsite tests should be taken by each secondary school and college student on return, followed by twice weekly testing at home. The Government will review testing requirements by the end of September.

### Health and care workers

- From Monday, most double vaccinated health and social care staff who are close contacts of cases will be able to routinely return to work, provided they have had a negative PCR test. Daily LFD tests will need to be taken for 10 days as a precaution.
- Staff working with clinically extremely vulnerable patients or service users will need a risk assessment to be carried out by a designated person in the workplace before they return to work.

### Workplace daily contact testing scheme

- The Workplace Daily Contact Testing scheme will continue, with testing sites offering daily testing as an alternative to self-isolation for close contacts who are not double jabbed. Over 700 sites are now in operation across critical sectors, and over 1 million test kits have been distributed.

#### NHS COVID-19 app

- Updates will be made to the COVID-19 app to align with the changing requirements to self-isolation. App users identified as a close contact who confirm that they are double vaccinated or under 18 not need to self-isolate and will be given advice to book a PCR test.
- If someone is called by NHS Test and Trace and told they are a contact, they will be asked their age and their vaccination status. If using the NHS COVID-19 app, people will be asked to self-declare if they are under 18 or double vaccinated.

#### **Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:**

*“Asking the close contacts of people with COVID-19 to self-isolate has played a critical role in helping us get this virus under control, and millions of people across the UK have made enormous sacrifices by doing this. Every single one of these sacrifices has helped us protect the NHS and save lives.*

*“Getting two doses of a vaccine has tipped the odds in our favour and allowed us to safely reclaim our lost freedoms, and from Monday we can take another huge step back towards our normal lives by removing self-isolation requirements for double jabbed people who are contacts of people with COVID-19. Double jabbed people who test positive will still need to self-isolate.*

*“Vaccines are what will bring this pandemic to an end – the wall of defence provided by the rollout is allowing us to get even closer to normal life. If you haven’t already, please make sure you come forward for your jab at the earliest opportunity.”*

#### **UK Health Security Agency Chief Executive (UKHSA), Dr Jenny Harries said:**

*“Thanks to the huge success of the vaccine programme, we are able to ease self-isolation requirements for double jabbed people and under 18s. It is important that close contacts continue to come forward for a PCR test, in order to detect the virus and variants of concern.*

*“Although two doses of vaccine will greatly reduce your own risk of becoming unwell with Covid-19, it is still possible to contract the virus and pass it to others. So if you develop symptoms at any time – vaccinated or not – you should get a test and be very careful in your contact with others until you have received a negative test result.”*