

# Suspected or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19

## Common Symptoms of COVID-19:

Fever, Cough, Shortness of Breath, sudden loss of sense of taste/smell.

## Symptoms in children also include:

Runny Nose\*, Sore Throat, Diarrhoea and Vomiting.

\*A child with nasal cold symptoms (runny nose or sneezing) can continue to attend their ELC/SAC setting, provided:

- The child is otherwise well and active,
- The child has no new cough or temperature, and
- There is no other person in the child's household who is a confirmed case of COVID-19 and no one in the household has been referred for testing for COVID-19.

HPSC guidance should be followed regarding attendance at the service:

- Staff who are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 should not attend
- A child with symptoms of a viral respiratory infection should not attend
- If someone in a child or staff members household is a confirmed case of COVID-19 or someone in the household has been referred for testing they should not attend
- If a child or staff member is identified as a close contact of someone who has COVID-19 they should not attend until advised by public health that they may do so
- Children or staff members who have been advised to self-isolate or restrict their movements should not attend

Note. In relation to a person who has been referred for testing the child may be able to return to childcare if the test on the person or persons in the house is reported as not detected. The duration of exclusion of a child with a viral respiratory tract infection should be at a minimum until 48 hours after symptoms have resolved but will be at least 10 days with the last 5 being fever free if they are tested and are positive for COVID-19

## Examples

(other scenarios can apply)

### Little Learners;

a full day service catering for 65 children aged birth-6 years, developed a plan for dealing with suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19, including designating an isolation space.

During the day, one staff member in a play pod of 24 (2 staff and 22 children) developed a fever and immediately informed their manager, went home and contacted their GP. Little Learners consulted their plan for dealing with suspected cases of Covid-19, the HPSC advice and contacted their CCC for additional support. While waiting for testing and results the play-pod remained open.

The staff member tested positive for Covid-19 and a member of the local public health team contacted the service manager. Under advice from Public Health, the play-pod was closed, parents of the 22 children in the play-pod were informed and advised of the positive result and were contacted by public health. Staff and children from the closed play-pod remained at home and testing was arranged for them.

None of the staff or children identified as close contacts by Public Health tested positive but were still required to restrict their movements for 14 days. Little Learners remained open throughout the process and closed the play-pod with the confirmed case only following advice from Public Health.

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## Cases in services

If an adult or child has symptoms of COVID-19 while in a service:

	Do	Don't
Move them to an isolation room/space 2m away from others	✓	
Arrange for them to go home	✓	
Advise that their GP should be contacted	✓	
Clean the room and disinfect contact surfaces when the person leaves	✓	
Wait and see if they develop other symptoms		✓
Automatically Close the Play-Pod or the Service		✓
Immediately contact all parents		✓
Send the other children/staff home		✓
Await advice from public health/HSE	✓	

## Examples

(other scenarios can apply)

### Rainbows End;

a sessional service catering for 22 children aged 2-6 years in one room, developed a plan for dealing with suspected and confirmed cases of Covid-19, including designating an isolation space.

During the morning, a staff member observed that one of the children had developed a new cough, a symptom of Covid-19 in children. The staff member put on a mask and brought the child to the designated isolation space where they waited with them. The manager contacted the child's parents and arranged immediate collection, advising them to contact their GP for advice. The room was cleaned and disinfected after the child left.

The service followed their plan and did not close the service. While waiting for test results the child did not attend Rainbows End. Following a negative test result and declaration by the child's parents that they have followed medical advice and the child has recovered from their cough, they returned to childcare.



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## Remember:

- Adults with symptoms or adults who need to care for a symptomatic child awaiting collection should keep as much distance as they can in the context of meeting the child's needs, be careful with respect to hand hygiene, avoid touching their face and wear a surgical mask, if possible. If a mask is not practical a visor may be suitable.
- In an emergency, call an ambulance

Confirmed COVID-19 cases should self-isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days, the last 5 of which should be free of fever, and should not return to the childcare setting until they are advised that it is safe to do so.

A medical or doctor's cert is not required in order for a child to return to a setting. A verbal or written declaration from a parent will suffice. See sample declaration at Appendix 1 of the HPSC Guidance.

Close contacts of a confirmed case should restrict their movements for 14 days. They should not attend the childcare facility during that time.

If a child with COVID-19 cannot be isolated at home and there is an ongoing exposure risk, household contacts should restrict movements for 17 days from the onset of symptoms in the case (or date of test if the confirmed case was asymptomatic).

- Services are advised to contact their local CCC for support in both suspected and confirmed cases.
- In a confirmed case, local public health will contact the service provider and will advise on next steps.
- All confirmed cases must be notified to Tusla within three working days.
- Services should have an electronic copy of contact details for all staff and children to hand in case public health require it. This should include name, address, DOB, contact name and number for parents/guardians, play-pod details.

