

IMPORTANT: New self-isolation guidance for schools

Managing COVID-19 cases is becoming increasingly challenging for educational settings in Cumbria, so Cumbria's Director of Public Health, Colin Cox and education leaders have agreed the following local additional advice measures.

Children and young people aged between the ages of 5 and 16, (unless exempt – see below) should now be advised to stay at home when a sibling tests positive for COVID-19 (via either a PCR or Lateral Flow test).

3-5 days following the onset of symptoms in the sibling who has tested positive (or test date if the positive case had no symptoms), the close contact child should get a PCR test. If this is negative, they can return to the setting, but should isolate again immediately and get another test if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 at a later date.

The groups exempt from this advice and able to continue to attend the setting when identified as a close contact of a sibling positive case are:

- . 12-18 year-olds who have had at least one dose of the vaccine more than 14 days ago**
- . Any child aged between 5 – 16 who has tested positive for COVID-19 themselves via a PCR test within the past 90 days.**

Why is this guidance being issued now?

In the week ending 17 September 2021, the 12-18 age group accounted for the greatest number of new cases in Cumbria followed by the 5-11 age group (+524 and +412 new cases respectively).

The 12-18 and 5-11 age groups also accounted for by far the greatest rates of new cases in Cumbria (1,431 and 1,106 new cases per 100k population respectively).

The 5-9 age group experienced the greatest numerical and proportional increase in new cases (+53%).