Professor Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director

E: HealthConditionCovidEnquiries@gov.scot

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

To Parents / Carers

31 August 2020

Common Cold and COVID-19 Symptoms

I understand these last few months have often been challenging, particularly for parents and carers. Now that schools and nurseries have returned I am writing to provide some advice where a child or young person in your care presents with symptoms of the common cold or similar bugs during this pandemic.

Following the return of schools after a prolonged break, it is common for colds and similar viral infections to circulate. In many cases, children will be well enough to attend school and continue their learning with little or no interruption to their education. In other cases, for instance where they have quite a heavy cold, they may need to take a day or two off to recover.

This is not the case for children and young people with potential COVID-19 symptoms, they are required to self-isolate and seek a test through nhsinform.scot or by calling 0800 028 2816.

In order to ensure your children do not miss out on their education, it is important to be clear about how COVID-19 symptoms differ from those of other infections that we normally see circulating at this time of year.

COVID-19 Symptoms

It is important that all of us – including those who make up the community around a school - are vigilant for the symptoms of COVID-19 and understand what actions we should take if someone develops them, either at school or at home.

The main symptoms to be aware of are:

- new continuous cough
- fever/high temperature
- loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste

If a young person or a child in your care develops any of the above symptoms, they should self-isolate and you should book them a test as soon as possible at NHSinform.scot/test-and-protect, or by calling 0800 028 2816.

We recommend testing only for those with a continuous cough, fever, or loss of or change in the sense of taste or smell. The UK senior clinicians continue to keep the symptoms for case definition under review and will continue to use evidence to adjust these if it becomes necessary.

It is essential that people who have COVID-19 symptoms, or who share a household with someone who has symptoms, do not attend school, nursery or other childcare settings, and must self-isolate along with all members of their household. If the test is negative, self-isolation can end for everyone. If the test is positive, Test and Protect will give you further advice.

Cold-like symptoms

If, however, your child does not have symptoms of COVID-19 but has other cold-like symptoms, such as a runny nose, they do not need to be tested and they and you do not need to self-isolate. Your child can go to school if fit to do so.

The Scottish Government appreciates the huge effort being made by parents, carers and school staff to ensure the risk of COVID-19 is minimised and to support children's education.

Further information

For further advice please visit the Parent Club website at:
www.parentclub.scot

or

www.nhsinform.scot

Professor Jason Leitch
National Clinical Director
Scottish Government

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Accredited Until 2020
disability confident LEADER