

FAQ's for the Christmas period

If you are organising a school based Christmas event remember to consider the key following COVID measures as part of your arrangements, and remember many of these will help prevent other winter viruses / infections too:

- Risk assessment
- Prevention messages / communications
- Testing
- Hand hygiene
- Social distancing
- Face coverings
- Cleaning
- Ventilation

Can the school host a fayre or fete?

Schools must assess the risk associated with allowing visitors into the school, and any planned events must be flexible in the event of additional measures being implemented. Schools can request that parents complete LFT tests before attending any events at the school, but these are completed at the parent / guardian / carer's discretion. It is also important to consider adhering to COVID-19 safety measures such as encouraging social distancing where possible, not gathering indoors, having hand washing or sanitising stations available. Schools may also decide not to hold large events as this does add additional risk of COVID spread. Guidance on preventing the spread of Coronavirus can be found [here](#). The event and attraction guidance document contains lots of information which schools might find useful if they are organising an event <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/events-and-attractions>

Can Nativities and Christmas shows still go ahead?

You will need to consider ways to reduce potential transmission. You could consider outdoors or, due to colder weather, indoors with reduced numbers and other measures e.g. good ventilation and access to hand washing facilities where provided. You will need to consider spread between children too and may want to keep children in consistent groups and keep these separate; you could host different groups on different days. Props and costumes should be cleaned between any shared uses. It is likely that allowing parents to attend will lead to crowding and we would support schools who decide not to allow parents to attend for this reason. If you do wish to have parents in attendance, you could limit the number of attendees per household or, given sufficient space, ensure the set up enables social distancing between households. A risk assessment will need to be put in place for any such event.

Can Santa and his reindeer visit the school?

Yes, but the event will need to be accompanied by a risk assessment. You will need to change the way visits from Santa work this year, and minimise close contacts between Santa and pupils. Santa and Elves should undertake LFT testing before attending the site.

Any visits from Reindeer will need to be completed in line with Animal Health regulations. Handlers will need to be able to provide evidence of public liability insurance, a Performing Animal Licence and a DEFRA movement licence. Your risk assessment should include:

- Waste clear up (provider should be doing this)
- Hygiene (provider should have sanitiser etc. but you will need to use soap and water before and after in addition to this, to remove oils/debris transferred to the Reindeers coat.
- Route in and out of the building, space for the vehicle (make sure access to the trailer isn't blocked, make sure children don't try to stand nearby the tailgate.)
- Make sure the handler is aware of fire safety, exit routes etc.
- Make sure children know what behaviour is expected (e.g. give a brief safety talk)
- No food given to the animal by children (other than anything provided by the handler)
- First aid and supervision by school staff

Can the school organise a school trip?

Given the likely gap in COVID-19 related cancellation insurance, if you are considering booking a new visit, whether domestic or international, you are advised to ensure that any new bookings have adequate financial protection in place. You should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits and ensure that any public health advice, such as hygiene and ventilation requirements, is included as part of that risk assessment.

You should refer to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office travel advice and the guidance on international travel before booking and travelling abroad. Please seek additional guidance on foreign travel from the Gov.uk website.

Do staff who are vaccinated still need to do things like use a face covering, observe social distancing, and participate in lateral flow testing?

Yes - Whilst we know the vaccine reduces the chance of you suffering from the COVID-19 disease, it could still be possible for you to catch and pass on to others. It still remains vitally important to play your part in slowing the spread of the virus.

What advice can I give to parents and children to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19?

Please always remember to:

- Stay at home and get a PCR test if you, or a household member, have a new continuous cough, high temperature or loss of smell or taste. To book your PCR test, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or telephone 119.
- Take part in lateral flow testing 2 times per week if you are a parent / guardian / carer. To order tests to be delivered to your home or find your nearest test site, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>
- Let your school know as soon as possible if you have a positive test result, either on a lateral flow or PCR test
- Keep your home well ventilated especially if you have guests inside. Open windows and doors when you can to allow fresh air to circulate.
- Wear face coverings and social distance in public places. With regard to your child's education or childcare setting, please wear your face covering at drop off and pick up times. When you cannot keep a 2 meter distance from others outside your household, wear your face mask.
- Wash your hands frequently and carry hand sanitiser with you.

And Finally...

