

Assisted Travel Guidance March 2021

1. Background

- 1.1 The government announced that all pupils will return to school from 8th March 2021, including vulnerable pupils.
- 1.2 At the time of this update the guidance from the Government relating to transport for vulnerable pupils remains unchanged. This guidance therefore continues to reflect previous guidance issued by the government and health professionals with regard to education settings and travel to reduce the risk of infection to children accessing transport. The relevant guidance is listed in the “References” section at the end of this document.
- 1.3 This guidance is for dedicated school transport. Dedicated transport is transport that is used only to carry pupils to school including statutory home to school transport. These are routes that are not accessible to the general public. Public transport services are routes which are also used by the general public.
- 1.4 This guidance is for the period from 1st January 2021 and updates previous guidance issued in September 2020.

2. Transport Providers and Staff

- 2.1 Any person who works in the delivery of transport should access a minimum weekly rapid coronavirus tests. This test (officially called a [Lateral Flow Test \(LFT\)](#) is designed to give a result within 30 minutes, allowing the quick identification of coronavirus cases in those who are asymptomatic, and respond immediately to reduce the spread of the virus.
- 2.2 To book your test visit <https://form.jotform.com/swhitw/lbsrapidcovidtest>
- 2.3 Tests can be booked at Sutton Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton SM1 1EA or Hill House, Bishopsford Way, Carshalton, SM4 6BL.
- 2.4 Parking is easier at Hill House if the crew are in the vehicle being used to provide transport.
- 2.5 Further information and FAQs can be found at the end of this guidance.
- 2.6 If any person who works in the delivery of transport or any member of their household develops a fever, or a new continuous cough, or a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia), they should not attend work and are advised to arrange a full [COVID-19 test](#)¹ and to follow the [guidance for people with Coronavirus symptoms](#).² This states that the ill person should remain in isolation for 10 days and the rest of the household in isolation for 14 days. If the test is negative they may return to work.

¹ <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

- 2.7 If any person who works in the delivery of transport does report sick with symptoms or is isolating due to a positive test then the Provider must inform the Transport Team. They should only pass on personal details with the permission of the member of staff.
- 2.8 Drivers and Passenger Assistants who are working on vehicles are best placed to identify risks and emerging issues. Employers should involve transport staff in assessing workplace risks and the development and review of workplace health and safety policies. Providers should be encouraged to identify, speak up and feed back on risks and control measures. When completing risk assessments providers should refer to [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\):safer transport guidance](#)³.
- 2.9 Drivers and Passenger Assistants are not required to keep socially distant from passengers whilst providing transport but they should follow Government [social distancing guidelines](#)⁴ at other times during the working day and when outside of work.
- 2.10 Staff must practice regular [hand hygiene](#)⁵, and respiratory and cough hygiene measures: [‘catch it, bin it, kill it’](#)⁶. Drivers and Passenger Assistants must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser to clean their hands before boarding vehicles.

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- 3.1 Providers should not transport children with symptoms of COVID-19
- 3.2 Drivers must wear a disposable single use mask for the duration of the journey.
- 3.3 Personal Assistants must wear a single use mask for the duration of the journey and any other PPE that they use in their day to day role.
- 3.4 Passengers should use hand sanitiser if they are able when boarding and leaving the vehicle.
- 3.5 Providers must retain sufficient quantities of hand sanitiser/wipes within vehicles to enable regular hand hygiene.
- 3.6 Passengers under the age of 11 are not required to wear a face covering.

³www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GldAajY4UGM&feature=emb_title

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<https://www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/content/uploads/2019/06/Respiratory-and-cough-hygiene-poster.pdf>

- 3.7 Under TfL guidance passengers aged over 11 must wear a face covering however are exempt from doing so if it may cause them distress. Many children over the age of 11 may find it distressing to wear a face covering and will choose not to. Some children may choose to wear a face covering and if they do, they must provide their own.

4. Children Becoming Unwell at School

- 4.1 If the child develops symptoms while at school, they should, whenever possible, be collected by a member of their household. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, and the setting needs to take responsibility for transporting them home, a risk assessment is required and the following options should be considered:
- use a vehicle with a bulkhead
 - the driver should use PPE, and the passenger should wear a face mask if they are old enough and able to do so.
- 4.2 Any members of staff who have helped someone with symptoms and any pupils who have been in close contact with them do not need to go home to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves (in which case, they should arrange a test) or if the symptomatic person subsequently tests positive or they have been requested to do so by NHS Test and Trace.
- 4.3 Everyone must wash their hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and running water or use hand sanitiser after any contact with someone who is unwell. The area around the person with symptoms must be cleaned with normal household bleach after they have left to reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people. See the COVID-19: cleaning of non-healthcare settings guidance.

5. Cleaning of Vehicles

- 5.1 Providers should follow the [guidance](#)⁷ to ensure the risk of infection to passengers and staff is minimised.
- 5.2 All vehicles, especially areas where passengers are located must be cleaned before and after every journey.
- 5.3 Particular attention should be paid to high touch areas such as door handles, head rests and safety rails that children may use to enter and exit the vehicles. Regular cleaning with a household disinfectant will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

6. Passenger Seating On Vehicles

- 6.1 The latest government [guidance on return to school](#)⁸ states that pupils do not mix with the general public so social distancing will **not** apply from autumn on dedicated transport, Dedicated transport includes home to school assisted transport for pupils with SEND.
- 6.2 Providers should try to maximise separation between individuals as much as practicably possible within the constraints of the vehicle but it is recognised that this will not always be possible. For example if the number of passengers on a minibus route allow then pupils should be seated with an empty seat between them. If there is room on an MPV pupils should be seated in separate rows.
- 6.3 Passengers are permitted to travel in the front seat of a vehicle with agreement of the transport team.
- 6.4 Providers must minimise the use of face-to-face seating where possible and practical. If vehicles have face-to-face seating that can be adjusted it must be adjusted to forward facing seating.
- 6.5 Pupils in the same school class bubble may be sat with each other.
- 6.6 Please contact the Transport Team if you wish to discuss seating within vehicles or if you have any questions relating to individual vehicles.

7. Ventilation

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure good ventilation of fresh air wherever possible by keeping windows or roof lights open.

8. Test and Trace

- 8.1 In order to support the Test and Trace Drivers or Passenger Assistants must keep a log of everybody who is on the vehicle and where they were seated for every journey.
- 8.2 These records must be kept for 21 days and then destroyed in line with GDPR regulations.
- 8.3 These records must be shared with Public Health if requested.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

And

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

- 8.4 Staff working directly with children should access weekly LFT testing in line with **Section 2** of this guidance.
- 8.4 Providers must ensure they understand the NHS Test and Trace process.
- 8.5 Providers must ensure that staff members and parents/carers understand that they will need to be ready and willing to:
- [book a test](#) if they or their child are displaying symptoms. Staff and pupils must not come into the school if they have symptoms and must be sent home to self-isolate if they develop them in school. All children can be tested, including children under 5, but children aged 11 and under will need to be helped by their parents/carers if using a home testing kit
 - provide details of anyone they or their child have been in close contact with if they were to test positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) or if asked by NHS Test and Trace
 - [self-isolate](#) if they have been in close contact with someone who tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), or if anyone in their household develops symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19)
- 8.6 Anyone who displays symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can and should get a test. Tests can be booked online through the NHS [testing and tracing for coronavirus](#) website, or ordered by telephone via NHS 119 for those without access to the internet. Essential workers, which includes anyone involved in education or childcare, have priority access to testing.
- 8.7 As stated in 2.3 above, if a Driver or Passenger Assistant reports sick due to symptoms of Covid 19 the provider must report this to the Transport Team immediately.

Lateral Flow Tests at the Civic Centre and Hill House

Rapid tests - ([LFT](#)) are currently available to selected key frontline workers. Email invites will be sent out directly to eligible staff groups, please do not book if you have not been sent an invite.

To book your test visit <https://form.jotform.com/swhitw/lbsrapidcovidtest>

Tests can be booked at Sutton Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, Sutton SM1 1EA or Hill House, Bishopsford Way, Carshalton, SM4 6BL.

Parking is easier at Hill House if the crew are in the vehicle being used to provide transport.

Civic Offices Test Site

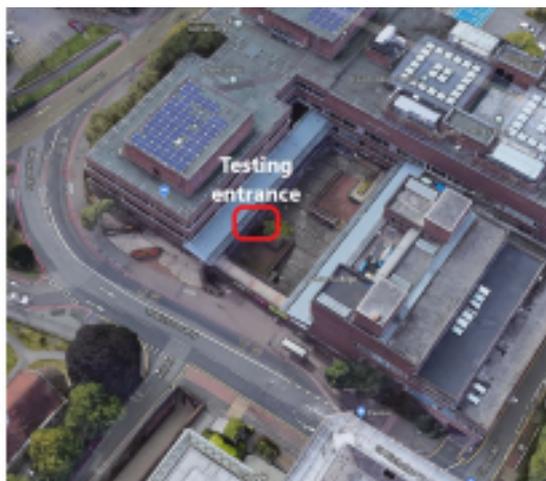
Nearest Bus Stops - Sutton Civic Centre, Sutton Park Road and Sutton Police Station

Nearest Train Station - Sutton

Car Park - Gibson Road.

IMPORTANT - The Rapid Testing Service for asymptomatic testing is located inside Sutton Civic Offices and is separate from the walk through testing site (for symptomatic testing) located in Sutton Car Park.

The site should be well signposted but please ensure you are attending the rapid testing site, via the side door as seen on the image below rather than the regular testing site for people with symptoms situated in the civic car park.



Important information for your test

- If, as a result of the rapid test you test positive, you must self-isolate and arrange a second test by calling 119 or via nhs.uk/coronavirus. This test

will confirm conclusively that you have the virus.

- If this result is also confirmed as positive, you will then be asked to provide details of those you have been in close contact with.
- If you test negative you can continue in your role and continue to follow all national guidance.

If you have been invited to test by your manager or employer, they will **not** be informed of your result. It is your responsibility to inform your manager or employer

The test can only look for the virus **at the time you test**. It is therefore essential that even if you test negative you continue to follow your employer's COVID secure working arrangements and observe the national COVID restrictions.

Please remember to:

- Wear a mask inside the building.
- Bring your phone in order to register with the NHS site when you arrive ● Read the attached instructions on how to perform the test ([attach to email](#)) or watch these videos. Site staff will be available to oversee and help with any queries

1. Instruction for swabbing with throat and nostril

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/ff208d78-2834-4111-9eab-606a13200a5f>

2. Instructions for swab - throat only

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/ff208d78-2834-4111-9eab-606a13200a5f>

If you experience any coronavirus symptoms before or after your test, isolate immediately and book a test in the usual way at nhs.uk/coronavirus or by calling 119.

Frequently asked questions

What is the test like?

The Lateral Flow Test (LFT) involves self-administering a nose and throat swab. The sample is processed on-site by trained operatives.

Who will administer the tests?

You will need to self-administer the swab following simple [step-by-step instructions](#). Advisors will be on hand if you need assistance. Once you have completed the swab, you will pass

this to a trained operator who will then complete the test process.

Who can access a test?

These Lateral Flow Tests are for staff who do not currently have symptoms of Coronavirus. If you do have symptoms, you should not take a LFT and instead you must book a PCR test online at nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119.

When will Lateral Flow Tests be available for staff?

Testing will be available from 16th December with appointments running between 8.00am-7.30pm (Monday - Friday)

Where will the tests take place?

The testing site will be at Sutton Council Civic Offices. When attending a test site you must follow Covid-19 rules at all times including social distancing and wearing face coverings in indoor spaces. See map and further directions above.

Why is the Council offering staff rapid Lateral Flow Tests?

The Council wants to offer staff and colleagues in front facing roles the chance to take a test and get a rapid 'snapshot' of whether they currently have Covid-19. Colleagues who receive a positive result will need to enter self-isolation for 10 days and undergo contact tracing to help prevent further transmission.

It's important to be clear that the test tells you whether you have Covid-19 at the moment you take it. It does not tell you whether you've previously had Covid-19. If you get a negative result, it does not mean you will remain Covid-negative for any specified length of time. Therefore it remains vitally important that everyone continues to observe Covid-19 guidance for everyone's benefit, including socially distancing, wearing face coverings when required and regularly washing your hands.

Are the tests free?

Yes, the tests are free of charge.

Are the tests mandatory?

No, the tests are not mandatory. They form part of a Government programme to reduce the potential of the virus spreading.

How do I book?

You can book your test by using this link <https://form.jotform.com/203353156812349>

How many test slots can I book?

Please book one test. Out of consideration for others in our community we ask that no one books more than one test appointment a week at the moment, so that the largest possible number of test slots are available to everyone. If we are able to be more flexible later in the process, we will update you.

Can I take the test during my working day?

Yes, but please liaise with your line manager first.

How will I find out my results?

You will receive an e-mail and/or a text message with your test results from NHS Test and Trace. Only you will receive the results from NHS Test and Trace. The Council will not receive them.

What happens if I test positive?

If you receive a positive test result from NHS Test and Trace, you should begin self-isolating. You will need to let us know. When you receive your test results NHS Test and Trace may give you further instructions.

How long will it take to find out my results?

You should receive your test results within 24 hours, and usually much sooner.

What should I bring with me?

Please bring a face covering and a wifi-enabled electronic device to register your test with the NHS Test and Trace website. You may also wish to bring a bottle of water for after the test.

References

Transport to school and other places of education: autumn term 2020

Published 11 August 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-on-autumn-term-2020/transport-to-school-and-other-places-of-education-autumn-term-2020>

Guidance for full opening: special schools and other specialist settings

Published 2nd July 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Guidance for full opening: schools

Published 2nd July 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools>

Additional operational guidance for special schools, special post-16 institutions and alternative provision

Published February 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-full-opening-special-schools-and-other-specialist-settings>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer transport guidance for operators

Updated 4 July 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>

Safe working in education, childcare and children's social care settings, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Updated 16 June 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care/safe-working-in-education-childcare-and-childrens-social-care-settings-including-the-use-of-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>

COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings

Updated 15 May 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings

Updated 1 June 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-implementing-protective-measures-in-education-and-childcare-settings>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer travel guidance for passengers

Updated 4 July 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>

COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection

Updated 13 July 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

