

# Yes Futures' response to COVID-19 outbreak



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Updated by: Sarah Sewell, Chief Executive

For the latest official information and advice regarding Coronavirus, please refer to [www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

## Introduction

Yes Futures is taking a pro-active stance to reduce the risk of Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection and will be following government advice closely.

Our primary concern is for the welfare of our young people, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders with whom we work.

All organisations have a duty to take steps that are reasonably necessary to ensure the welfare, health and safety of employees. At the same time, we must take care not to cause unnecessary alarm and conduct a measured response to the situation in line with official government guidance, ensuring we can deliver our obligations to our schools, partners and volunteers as far as possible.

The current risk level in the UK is **moderate** and the measures listed below will stay in place until this is reduced to **low**. Should the UK Chief Medical Officer raise the risk from moderate to high then Yes Futures will implement more stringent procedures. We will be monitoring the situation closely and will be providing regular updates to our team.

At present, schools should not be closing in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless directed to do so by Public Health England. In addition, the government is in phase 1 (Contain) of their 4 phase plan<sup>1</sup>, and have not indicated that they will escalate to phase 2 at the current time. For more information on the government's plans should escalation be necessary, please see the final page of this document.

With this present situation, we will continue to operate as usual whilst ensuring we are taking all reasonable measures to support the UK's efforts to contain COVID-19.

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<sup>1</sup> The Government's four phase plan of response:

[Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk>]

*The overall phases of our plan to respond to COVID-19 are:*

- *Contain: detect early cases, follow up close contacts, and prevent the disease taking hold in this country for as long as is reasonably possible*
- *Delay: slow the spread in this country, if it does take hold, lowering the peak impact and pushing it away from the winter season*
- *Research: better understand the virus and the actions that will lessen its effect on the UK population; innovate responses including diagnostics, drugs and vaccines; use the evidence to inform the development of the most effective models of care*
- *Mitigate: provide the best care possible for people who become ill, support hospitals to maintain essential services and ensure ongoing support for people ill in the community to minimise the overall impact of the disease on society, public services and on the economy*

## Guidance for Yes Futures Employees

Yes Futures employees have a duty to look after their own health and safety and that of their colleagues, which includes:

- cooperating with the Chief Executive's guidance given below to ensure a safe workplace and safe programme delivery;
- informing the Chief Executive if you may be particularly vulnerable, such as pregnant employees, or anyone with pre-existing medical conditions;
- maintaining strong wellbeing and personal health through good hygiene, diet and sleep;
- following self-isolation advice if unwell;
- following the official government advice, given below which is being updated regularly on the Public Health England and the NHS UK websites.

**If at any point you become aware that you have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 you should inform the Chief Executive immediately and contact NHS 111 for further advice.**

The following guidance should be read in detail and specific actions undertaken, which are listed at the end of this section.

### Remote Working

It is important that we are responsive to be able to work remotely at short notice. As such, **all office-based employees should take steps to ensure they have adequate resources (e.g. a laptop) to be able to work from home at short notice.** This should be a Yes Futures laptop if possible, but can be a personal laptop on a temporary basis as long as key data is secured through a password and good security of the device at home.

It is also advisable to work from home whenever possible, in order to further minimise travel and contact with the general public, especially by public transport at peak times.

Our flexible working arrangements allows all employees to work from home at their line manager's discretion, and this should be considered wherever it has minimal impact on your work or the operations of the charity. If you are unsure about whether you should work from home, please discuss with your line manager or the Chief Executive.

### Office Hygiene

On the days when employees are using the office, it is vital that shared spaces are kept clean and hygienic, including using anti-bacterial disinfectant on key areas, such as the tea making station, door handles, the kettle, fridge and microwave handles, and any other commonly touched area.

### External Meetings

It is advisable to minimise travel as much as possible, especially by public transport at peak times. As such, any external meetings should be considered carefully and if they can be done by telephone this should be considered. If not, but can be postponed with minimal impact, then this should be the next stage. If you are unsure about any particular meeting, please discuss with the Chief Executive.

## School sessions and trips

Current government guidance as of 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 is to continue operations as normal:

- *"Currently there are minimal cases outside the risk areas and therefore the likelihood of an individual coming into contact with a confirmed case is low."*
- *"There is no need to advise any pupils, student or staff to avoid normal activities or educational settings unless they have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19."*

**At present we will continue to deliver our programmes and go about setting up trip days as planned.** However, should the risk level increase or government guidance change, we will adapt our activities in accordance with that guidance, which may include cancelling or postponing programme sessions.

In the meantime, it is possible that our partner schools and other partners may put stringent practises in place to ensure the safety of their staff and students, so all Yes Futures employees should be aware of the need to practise caution. If necessary, Yes Futures employees can refer any concerns to the Chief Executive.

If trips go ahead as planned, it will be necessary to add an additional line to each Risk Assessment to ensure the trip leader has prepared for containing the virus. This may include, for example, adapting travel plans to take minimal public transport where possible, and keeping alcohol-based hand gel and ensuring all staff and students use this as regular points throughout the day.

## Talking with young people about the COVID-19 outbreak

The below story from Andrew Hall, Specialist Safeguarding Consultant at *Success In Schools Ltd* highlights the importance of ensuring a calm, measured and reassuring approach when talking to young people about the about the COVID-19 outbreak.

*"I think that whilst it is important not to understate that Coronavirus is a serious issue, I think it is important that we don't frighten children, especially the younger ones. In one of my seminars this week, one person told me that she had been checking her eight-year old son's internet history. She was shocked to find that his searches were all about Coronavirus, including do children die from getting Coronavirus? And yet, he had not asked his mum one single question about it. So, I think we just need to be a bit cautious about the words we use to not make children fearful."*

## Department for Education Coronavirus helpline

If you would like further advice, or specific information relating to working with schools, the DfE has opened a helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

## Actions for the Yes Futures team to take immediately

- Programme Executives to check with schools whether they will be doing any additional checks on visitors (for example checks on whether individuals have been to a [Category 1 area](#)), and ensure this information is passed to volunteer Coaches if relevant.
- Programme Executives to ask all volunteer Coaches to confirm in writing (by email or text message) they have not been to a Category 1 area and have not had contact with any confirmed case before visiting a school. This information should be recorded centrally on the All Coach Spreadsheet, updated regularly and monitored by the Administrative Officer.
- Programme Executives to inform and reassure all volunteer Coaches of our response, including sending a link to access this document on our website.
- Programme Executives to check with Play Your Part partners their response to the situation and establish contingency plans should a Play Your Part trip need to be cancelled.
- Head of Programmes to check with World of Work partners their response to the situation and establish contingency plans should a World of Work trip need to be cancelled.
- Head of Programmes to check with PGL their response to the situation and establish contingency plans should an Into the Wild trip need to be cancelled.
- Head of Programmes and Programme Executives to adjust Risk Assessments in light of the Coronavirus precautions.
- Administrative Officer to ensure all shared spaces within the Yes Futures office are cleaned and disinfected regularly, and ensure this responsibility is delegated if she is not present in the office. The Impact Manager to support with this.
- All office-based employees to take steps to ensure they have adequate resources (e.g. a laptop) to be able to work from home at short notice.
- All employees to consider adjusting any external meetings to phone calls (stage 1) or postponing to a later date if a phone call is not possible (stage 2).
- All employees to read and implement the government guidance for the general public (key points of which are given below).

## Informing procedure

All employees must inform the Chief Executive immediately if they discover:

- that any employee or volunteer coach is diagnosed with COVID-19;
- that the office has to close due to COVID-19;
- there is likely to be a cancellation to a trip or Into the Wild residential;
- there is likely to be any negative financial implications for Yes Futures;
- any other important COVID-19-related information which may have an implication for Yes Futures.

The Chief Executive must inform the Board of Trustees of any serious issues related to the above.

The following pages contain information taken from the Public Health England website. It has been summarised, shortened and key points highlighted, to provide a shorter version of content relevant for Yes Futures.

However, the information online is being updated regularly and therefore may change from the information given on the following pages. Therefore, individuals should always check online to ensure they are following the most up to date guidance before acting on any situation described below.

## Official government guidance for the general public

*Important note: this information has been taken from the Public Health England website and may be updated regularly after the last updated date of this document.*

[Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk> ]

Many of the actions that people can take themselves – especially washing hands more; and the catch it, bin it, kill it strategy for those with coughs and sneezes – will help in delaying the peak of the infection.

### Preventing spread of infection

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See Catch it, Bin it, Kill it
- people who feel unwell should stay at home and should not attend work or any education or childcare setting
- pupils, students, staff and visitors should wash their hands:
  - before leaving home
  - on arrival at school
  - after using the toilet
  - after breaks and sporting activities
  - before food preparation
  - before eating any food, including snacks
  - before leaving school
- use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

if you are worried about your symptoms or those of a child or colleague, please call NHS 111. Do not go directly to your GP or other healthcare environment.

### Returning from travel

People who have returned from [Category 1 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days should self-isolate. This includes avoiding attending an education setting or work until 14 days after they return.

People who have returned from [Category 2 specified countries/areas](#) in the last 14 days, are advised to stay at home if they develop symptoms. All other pupils or students and staff

should continue to attend school or university, including their siblings attending the same or a different school (unless advised not to by public health officials).

If an individual has returned from a Category 2 areas and is currently well:

- they are advised to self-isolate only if they develop symptoms
- they can continue to attend work or education
- they do not need to avoid contact with other people
- their family do not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities
- testing people with no symptoms for COVID-19 is currently not recommended
- it is useful to always take a mobile phone with them when they go out so that they can contact others if they do become unwell

If an individual has returned from a Category 2 areas and becomes unwell:

- they should stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as they would with other flu viruses (see this [home isolation advice sheet](#))
- they (or a family member, colleague or member of staff) should call NHS 111 immediately for them to be assessed by an appropriate specialist, as quickly as possible
- they should stay at home and should not attend work or education
- they should not go directly to their GP or other healthcare environment
- if they require emergency medical attention, call 999 and tell the call handler or ambulance control that the person has a history of recent travel to risk areas for COVID-19
- see [further information](#) and the [Public Health England Blog](#)

## Further advice

Everyone can help support the UK's response by:

- following public health authorities' advice, for example on hand washing
- reducing the impact and spread of misinformation by relying on information from trusted sources, such as that on [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk), [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot), [www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net), <https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19> and [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
- checking and following the latest FCO travel advice when travelling and planning to travel
- ensuring you and your family's vaccinations are up to date as this will help reduce the pressure on the NHS/HSCNI through reducing vaccine-preventable diseases
- checking on elderly or vulnerable family, friends and neighbours
- using NHS 111 (or NHS 24 in Scotland or NHS Direct Wales) (including online, where possible), pharmacies and GPs responsibly, and go to the hospital only when you really need to. This is further explained on the NHS website: [When to go to A&E and Choose Well Wales](#)
- being understanding of the pressures the health and social care systems may be under, and receptive to changes that may be needed to the provision of care to you and your family.
- accepting that the advice for managing COVID-19 for most people will be self-isolation at home and simple over-the-counter medicines
- checking for new advice as the situation changes



## Information about the virus

***Important note: this information has been taken from the Public Health England website and may be updated regularly after the last updated date of this document. You should refer to the relevant sections of the Government website as a first port of call*** (eg.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-covid-19>)

### About COVID-19

A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China in January 2020.

The incubation period of COVID-19 is between 2 to 14 days. This means that if a person remains well 14 days after contact with someone with confirmed coronavirus, they have not been infected.

### Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The following symptoms may develop in the 14 days after exposure to someone who has COVID-19 infection:

- cough
- difficulty in breathing
- fever

Generally, these infections can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

### How COVID-19 is spread

From what we know about other coronaviruses, spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person.

Droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (termed respiratory secretions) containing the virus are most likely to be the most important means of transmission.

There are two routes by which people could become infected:

- secretions can be directly transferred into the mouths or noses of people who are nearby (within 2 metres) or could be inhaled into the lungs
- it is also possible that someone may become infected by touching a surface or object that has been contaminated with respiratory secretions and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes (such as touching a door knob or shaking hands then touching own face).

There is currently no good evidence that people who do not have symptoms are infectious to others.



## What to do if?

*Important note: this information has been taken from the Public Health England website and may be updated regularly after the last updated date of this document. You should refer to the relevant sections of the Government website as a first port of call* (eg.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>)

### What to do if an employee, student, volunteer or a member of the public becomes unwell and believe they have been exposed to COVID-19

If the person has not been to specified areas in the last 14 days, then normal practice should continue.

If someone becomes unwell in the workplace and has travelled to China or other affected countries, the unwell person should be removed to an area which is **at least 2 metres** away from other people. If possible find a room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a staff office. If it is possible to open a window, do so for ventilation.

The individual who is unwell should **call NHS 111 from their mobile, or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk)** and explain which country they have returned from in the last 14 days and outline their current symptoms. People who become unwell should be advised not to go to their GP, pharmacy, urgent care centre or a hospital.

Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, they should remain at least 2 metres from other people. **They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag or pocket then throw the tissue in the bin. If they don't have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow.**

If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available.

Make sure that children and young people know to tell a member of staff if they feel unwell.

### What to do if a case of COVID-19 (pupil, student or staff) is suspected in your childcare or education setting

If anyone has been in contact with a suspected case in a childcare or educational setting, **no restrictions or special control measures are required while laboratory test results for COVID-19 are awaited.** There is no need to close the setting or send other learners or staff home. As a precautionary measure, the NHS are currently testing a very large number of people who have travelled back from affected countries, the vast majority of whom test negative. Therefore, until the outcome of test results is known there is no action that staff members need to take apart from cleaning specific areas and disposing of waste (see below).

Once the results arrive, those who test negative for COVID-19 will be advised individually about return to education.

Family and friends who have not had close contact with any original confirmed case of COVID-19 **do not need to take any precautions or make any changes to their own activities**

**such as attending childcare or educational settings or work, unless they become unwell.** If they become unwell, they should call NHS 111 and explain their symptoms and discuss any known contact with the case to consider if they need further assessment.

### **How to clean educational establishments where there were children, students or staff with suspected cases of COVID-19**

Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the suspected case has come into contact with must be cleaned using disposable cloths and household detergents, according to current recommended workplace legislation and practice.

These include:

- all surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected. If a person becomes ill in a shared space, these should be cleaned as detailed above.

### **What to do with rubbish in the educational establishment, including tissues, if children, students or staff become unwell with suspected COVID-19**

All waste that has been in contact with the individual, including used tissues, and masks if used, should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. It should be put in a safe place and marked for storage until the result is available. If the individual tests negative, this can be put in the normal waste.

Should the individual test positive, you will be instructed what to do with the waste.

## Appendix: The Government's phased response – more information

*(Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-action-plan/coronavirus-action-plan-a-guide-to-what-you-can-expect-across-the-uk>)*

### The phased response – what we will do next

In the event of the outbreak worsening, or a severe prolonged pandemic, the response will escalate, and the focus will move from Contain to Delay, through to Mitigate. During this phase the pressures on services and wider society may start to become significant and clearly noticeable.

The decision to step up the response from Contain to Delay and then Mitigate will be taken on advice from the UK's CMOs, taking into account the degree of sustained transmission and evident failure of measures in other countries to reduce spread.

Action that would be considered could include population distancing strategies (such as school closures, encouraging greater home working, reducing the number of large-scale gatherings) to slow the spread of the disease throughout the population, while ensuring the country's ability to continue to run as normally as possible. The UK governments' education departments' planning assumptions include the possibility of having to close educational settings in order to reduce the spread of infection.