



TIPS FOR TEACHERS

Covid infection can affect children and young people differently. It can take a long time to recover enough to think about going back to school. Some children will inevitably try to return to education too early to see friends as well as keep up with their studies. Children with, or without a diagnosis of Long Covid may need reassurance that it is okay to prioritise their recovery. It is likely that some will need additional support.

WARNING SIGNS THAT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON IS NOT READY TO RETURN TO SCHOOL

- Reports that they are spending all the time they are not at school sleeping/resting.
- Unusually heightened emotions at school or home - easily irritable, angry or quick to cry.
- **Looking exhausted - yawning, sleepy eyes.**
- Frequently reports feeling unwell or troublesome symptoms - dizziness, headaches, nausea.
- **Unable to concentrate.**
- Complains of non-specific pain.



SCHOOL TRIAL

Children and young people living with Long Covid will most likely need a phased return to school to avoid a worsening of symptoms

Can they be driven to school rather than walk?

Do they need support from an 'access' taxi?

Who will be the key member of staff offering them support on the day?

Will they need special equipment?

After a trial, ask the family to monitor for worsening symptoms over the next few days. If this is successful think about how to build up their attendance gradually.

HOW CAN THE SCHOOL HELP

Ask the Special Educational Needs specialist to provide a review of the child/young person.

Put in place a risk assessment that takes account of additional needs.

Discuss a troubleshooting plan with the family. Encourage the child to be involved in the plan.

Provide a quiet room for children and young people living with Long Covid to rest. This should ideally be somewhere they can lie down (in darkness if needed).

Conserving energy for recovery is the priority. Consider equipment/adaptations that might make activities and tasks less energy draining.

As necessary, consider:

- blended learning allowing for a mix of in-person and virtual learning
- **a wheelchair to move around.**
- a backpack instead of an over one shoulder bag.
- **asking friends to carry books between classes.**
- using a laptop/tablet/audio recorder to take notes.
- **having extra support from a teaching assistant to repeat or clarify task instructions.**
- providing instructions in writing.
- **providing or encouraging noise-cancelling headphones for quiet focus activities.**
- allowing children/young people to leave their class earlier to get to the next class when the corridors are less busy.
- **avoiding a purely academic focus. To aid recovery children and young people should be encouraged to balance their studies with the social parts of the school day and to do things they enjoy when out of school.**
- being cautious with encouraging physical education. For some children and young people living with Long Covid who have Post - Exertional Malaise or cardiac symptoms, exercise is not recommended. Request a doctors letter and include it in the risk assessment.
- **planning for days when symptoms are worse, e.g. regular breaks, alternative activities**
- not pushing children and young people to participate in lessons until they are ready, e.g. allow them to volunteer answers rather than call on them unexpectedly.
- **exam or coursework adjustments, e.g. providing extra time, quiet room etc.**

Accessing school-based occupational therapy support can give more individualised tips and strategies. Some children and young people may need an EHCP to access this support.

It is possible that for some children; Long Covid will equate to a disability in terms of duration and impact on everyday life. Consider reasonable adjustments at an early stage to sustain a return to education.

This should be balanced with the child's overall health and wellbeing & leave energy for joy.

Access to home-schooling or may be appropriate and some children will require a lengthy period of recovery without considering school at all. This is obviously something that will need discussing with the health, social and educational teams alongside the parents/guardians and child themselves.

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.longcovidkids.org

Long Covid Kids Support Group

Recovery Stages Schedules

Long Covid Kids Pacing Penguins

Long Covid Kids Cautious Tortoise

Long Covid Physio

CDC

NHS

[https://educationendowmentfoundatio](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/special-educational-needs-disabilities/)

[n.org.uk/tools/guidance-](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/special-educational-needs-disabilities/)

[reports/special-educational-needs-](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/special-educational-needs-disabilities/)

[disabilities/](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/special-educational-needs-disabilities/)