

**Norland College
COVID-19
Placement Protocol**

Norland College's [Risk Mitigation Guidance document](#) states the following:

Placements

It is our intention that all students will access placements in schools, nurseries and families. To keep you safe, settings, families and students will be **asked to complete and sign our Health and Safety Risk Assessment** form to allow the placement to proceed. The risk assessment is designed to highlight and maintain safe working practices for all. It covers many aspects, including responsibilities for washing of hands, maintaining hygiene and cleaning routines, creating a social bubble, and what to do if you start to feel unwell. **The placement team are available to support and guide you** with further information if you feel unsure or wish to discuss any aspect of the risk assessment further. Keeping everybody safe is our priority.

Virtual placements

Virtual placements will replace hands-on placements if government guidance changes. This will ensure that Norland Diploma learning outcomes are covered and that every student continues to have the opportunity to progress.

As part of the risk assessment process, the student will liaise with the family/setting prior to commencement of the placement in order to identify the particular measures in place in the setting or home, to ensure the student follows their protocols. Through this professional discussion, the student and the setting/family need to feel confident that the arrangement is workable and follows current guidelines.

We always hope for the best but need also to plan for a **range of scenarios** we may need to consider, including a further lockdown or other COVID-19-related events, once students are in their placements.

Placements should also read Norland's Outbreak Response Plan and the information charts regarding the protocols to be followed for suspected and confirmed cases, available at norland.ac.uk/coronavirus-response.

Please note that in making decisions about continuing on placement in these various scenarios, we have taken into consideration the current government guidelines, such as the [Plan to Rebuild Document](#), which states (on p. 26) that childcare, for example nannies and childminders, can take place subject to being able to meet the public health principles. These are covered by the Risk Mitigation Guidance document.

By 'teaching group bubble', we mean the groups in which you are taught – e.g. Group A1, A2, B1 and N2 OR Group C1, C2, D1 and D2.

By 'placement', we mean a family or a setting unless otherwise specified.

Scenarios – suspected cases

A ‘suspected case’ is anyone who displays the main symptoms of COVID-19, as per NHS self-assessment guidelines [[here](#)]

1. If Norland College has a suspected case of COVID-19 (staff or student)

In the event of a student reporting a suspected case for themselves or a member of their housing bubble and having to self-isolate, the placement team will, at the first opportunity, contact the relevant placements. The student will not be able to remain in the placement for the self-isolation period while waiting for the result of the NHS test. The placement team, the student and the placement will decide whether the student can engage with the placement online, or whether they should undertake a virtual placement instead.

In the case of family placements, where the self-isolation occurs may depend on the circumstances of the placement and will be decided upon by the family, the student and the placement team together. The student can explore with the placement how they might continue to engage with the children in a meaningful way that is beneficial to all, if the student is well enough to do so.

If the COVID-19 test comes back negative, the student will resume placement activity as soon as possible. If the COVID-19 test comes back positive, the actions in the Confirmed Case section of the Norland Outbreak Response Plan will be instigated.

In the event of a staff member having a suspected case and having to self-isolate, the placement will not be informed unless there has been recent and close contact with the student in that placement or with the placement itself.

2. If a placement (family or setting) has a suspected case of COVID-19

In the event of a suspected case of COVID-19 in the setting/family, the setting/family must contact the placement team at the first opportunity. A decision can then be made by the placement team, the placement and the student about whether or not the student continues in the placement, via a professional discussion. For example, if a staff member at the placement needs to self-isolate, it is likely that the setting and the student will continue unless the student has an underlying health condition. If the placement is with a family and a family member is self-isolating, then the student will also need to self-isolate, either in their own home (setting or daily family) or in the family’s home if they are in the same household (residential or live-in). Depending on the decision and the situation, there may be opportunities for the student to continue to engage with the setting or family. For example, they might be able to continue to contribute to online activities for the setting.

All those within the student’s bubble groups (teaching and housing) will be informed via the contact tracing procedure in the sense that their placements (family or setting) will be informed that their student is in a bubble in which another student’s placement has a suspected case. This will help to ensure that informed decisions can be made by students and their own placement groups. If a placement (family or setting) that has a student within the bubble groups decides that the student should not continue due to concerns about the risk, the student should contact the placement team to engage with a virtual placement. If the student has had recent contact with a member of college staff, a decision will also be made about mitigating the risk at college.

The College will be guided by the placement (setting or family) and NHS advice regarding the return of students to placements.

Scenarios – confirmed cases

A 'confirmed case' is when an NHS test has been taken and the test is positive [[NHS guidance](#)]

- 1. If Norland College has to close its campus due to a local or national lockdown, or if a confirmed case of COVID-19 is identified for a student or staff member**

Lockdown

In the event of Norland having to close its campus due to a local or national lockdown, or if a decision is made due to a heightened risk of transmission, the College will move immediately online and will, at the first opportunity, contact settings and families and alert them to the change in operations. All placements in settings and families will immediately be temporarily suspended and virtual placement scenarios will be made available to students, including virtual visits/meetings conducted by the placement team. Although we are aware that early years settings may continue to operate even under lockdown, as they are considered key workers, we will nonetheless suspend placements due to the increased risks to all.

However, students who are on placements with families may have the option to continue with their placement, as the risk of transmission is reduced in these contexts and the government allows home-based childcare to continue. This decision will be made by the family and the student together via a professional discussion about whether or not the family is comfortable having the student continue their placement. This decision may depend on whether or not the student has been in the same bubble groups (housing and teaching) as the infected student/member of staff.

The College will be guided by Public Health England (PHE) advice regarding reopening sites and lifting the suspension of placements.

Confirmed case

The College will inform all placements if a confirmed case occurs in the Norland community, and the placement team will contact any relevant settings to discuss any new arrangements that may need to occur if their student is affected in any way by the confirmed case so that an informed decision can be made regarding the level of risk.

If the confirmed case is the student in that setting/family or a student who has been in the same bubble groups (housing and teaching) as the confirmed case, they will not be returning until the confirmed case has recovered and a sufficient self-isolation period has occurred to ensure no one else in the bubble has been infected. The NHS Test and Trace service will contact the infected person in order to alert others who may have caught the virus. For any student with an underlying health condition, the placement will not continue. For students directly affected by the confirmed case who are in live-in or residential placements, the placement team will discuss with the family the best way forward for all concerned.

- 2. If the setting has to close due to lockdown (national or local) or a confirmed case of COVID-19, or if the family has a confirmed case within the household**

In the above cases, the setting/family must contact the placement team at the first opportunity and the student will be removed from the placement. The student can then explore with the setting/family, via a professional discussion, how she or he might continue to work with them. In the case of a setting, the student will no longer attend the placement. In the case of a family, the

student may go into lockdown or self-isolate with the family. The discussion may include clarifying how the student might still engage with the placement in a meaningful way, in line with the setting's own provision during closure or the family's lockdown arrangements. For example, they might be able to continue to contribute to online activities for the setting, or they may choose to go into lockdown with the family.

All those within the student's bubble groups (teaching and housing) will be informed via the contact tracing procedure so that informed decisions can be made by students and their own placement groups. If a placement (family or setting) that has a student within the bubble groups decides that the student should not continue due to concerns about the risk, the student should contact the placement team to engage with a virtual placement. If the student has had recent contact with a member of college staff, a decision will also be made about mitigating the risk at college.

The College will be guided by the placement (family or setting) and PHE advice regarding the return of students to placements.

Note: The placement team will enable all students who have lost time in placement to have continued opportunities to meet the required learning outcomes that, if successfully achieved, will result in progression. This may be through virtual placements and/or through further additional placements once circumstances allow for placements to continue. These arrangements may be made on a Set or individual case-by-case basis.

Please see the information charts relating to placements for a summary of these protocols and the actions that need to be taken.

What should I do if I think I might have COVID-19 while on placement?

Students

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)

a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.

If you have one or more of these symptoms, then you must follow the guidance from the 'What should I do if I think I might have COVID-19?' information chart. Additionally, you must:

CONTACT THE PLACEMENT TEAM

Contact placements@norland.ac.uk to discuss whether you can engage with the placement online, or whether you should instead undertake a virtual placement



ON A RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT?

Notify your placement family and contact placements@norland.ac.uk to discuss arrangements regarding self-isolation



RETURN TO PLACEMENT

You will only be allowed to return to placement once your self-isolation period has ended or if you receive a negative test result. You will need to agree your return to placement with the placement team.



COVID-19 DATABASE

The placement team will update the COVID-19 database and inform relevant tutors, following the contact tracing procedure

What should I do if my placement setting has a suspected case of COVID-19?

CONTACT THE PLACEMENT TEAM

The family/setting will contact placements@norland.ac.uk to decide whether to continue or suspend the placement



CONTACT STUDENT(S)

[Placements@norland.ac.uk](mailto:placements@norland.ac.uk) will contact relevant student(s) to advise them to self-isolate as a precaution, contact NHS 119 or use the NHS online portal to book a test, or call NHS 111 if uncertain. Bubble groups will be informed where necessary via the contact tracing procedure.



RETURN TO PLACEMENT

Students should contact placements@norland.ac.uk to arrange their return to placement once the setting is ready for them to return



COVID-19 DATABASE

The placement team will update the COVID-19 database and inform relevant tutors, following the contact tracing procedure

What should I do if my COVID-19 test result is positive while on placement?

Students

If you test positive for COVID-19 while on placement, then you must follow the guidance from the 'What should I do if my COVID-19 test is positive?' information chart. Additionally, you must:

CONTACT THE PLACEMENT TEAM

Contact placements@norland.ac.uk and your placement setting to discuss whether you can engage with the placement online, or whether you should undertake a virtual placement instead (if you are well enough)



ON A RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT?

Notify your placement family and contact placements@norland.ac.uk to discuss arrangements regarding self-isolation



RETURN TO PLACEMENT

You will only be allowed to return to placement once your self-isolation period has ended and you are well enough. You will need to agree your return with the placement team.



COVID-19 DATABASE

The placement team will update the COVID-19 database and inform relevant tutors, following the contact tracing procedure

What shall I do if my placement has a positive case of COVID-19?

CONTACT THE PLACEMENT TEAM

The family/setting will contact placements@norland.ac.uk to decide whether to continue or suspend the placement



CONTACT STUDENT(S)

[Placements@norland.ac.uk](mailto:placements@norland.ac.uk) will contact relevant student(s) to advise them to self-isolate as a precaution, contact NHS 119 or use the NHS online portal to book a test, or call NHS 111 if uncertain. Bubble groups will be informed where necessary via the contact tracing procedure.



RETURN TO PLACEMENT

Students should contact placements@norland.ac.uk to negotiate their return to placement once the setting is ready for them to return



COVID-19 DATABASE

The placement team will update the COVID-19 database and inform relevant tutors, following the contact tracing procedure