Latest numbers on COVID-19 in the UK – 13 August 2020

We have combined data from the government’s daily figures\textsuperscript{1}, the government’s report on NHS Test and Trace\textsuperscript{2}, ONS infection survey\textsuperscript{3} and each nation’s official death registries.

1. Number of new deaths from COVID-19 in the UK (and how deaths are counted).

2. Number of new hospital admissions in England.

3. Number and location of new cases in the UK.

4. Summary.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} \url{https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/}
  \item \textsuperscript{2} \url{https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-test-and-trace-statistics-england-weekly-reports}
  \item \textsuperscript{3} \url{https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveypilot/latest}
\end{itemize}
How to count deaths from COVID-19?

**Gold standard:** count everyone who has “COVID-19” on their death certificate regardless of whether they had a test or not. Takes a little while to filter through, and you don’t know how many cases they represent.

If you want to keep daily track for monitoring:

But at what point do you stop assuming that someone who died AFTER COVID died FROM COVID?
How to count deaths from COVID-19?

**Gold standard**: count everyone who has “COVID-19” on their death certificate regardless of whether they had a test or not. Takes a little while to filter through, and you don’t know how many cases they represent.

If you want to keep daily track for monitoring:

- New confirmed cases over time
- New deaths from cases reported over time

Other nations chose 28 days from positive test. England chose “never” (not unreasonable at height of first wave).

England has now moved to 28 days to be in line with other nations (reasonable given first wave several months ago).

BUT because people do die from COVID more than 28 days after positive test, PHE will also report 60 day interval.
These are registered deaths where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate, regardless of location.

Data from:
Northern Ireland: [www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/weekly-deaths](http://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/weekly-deaths)
Number of new hospital admissions with COVID-19 per day in England

7-day rolling average has been flat since 2nd August

63 on 10th August

58 on 3rd August

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/
Number of new UK confirmed COVID-19 cases (people who have had a positive test)

Data from https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/

New confirmed cases

7-day rolling average

Counting changed on 2nd July

1441 on 14th August

871 on 7th August
Can increased testing explain increase in cases?

Percentage of people tested who then test positive ("positivity rate")

Data from https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-test-and-trace-statistics-england-weekly-reports

Data covering 28 May – 5 August
Positivity rates have gone up since mid July, but first week of August showed a small drop

Percentage of people tested who then test positive (“positivity rate”)

Data covering 28 May – 5 August

Data from https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-test-and-trace-statistics-england-weekly-reports
Where are the cases?

England – 28 July

Engalnd - 5 August

Except for NW England, hotspots getting cooler and no big new hotspots. Plausible that local restrictions are working, plus hot weather & people spending more time outdoors is putting brake on transmission.

Consistent with ONS reporting flattening of recent increase.
Many countries in Europe are experiencing increase in cases

7-day rolling average of new confirmed COVID-19 cases per day across similarly sized European countries

Some reasons:
• Tourists coming in
• Domestic tourists returning
• Opening bars and restaurants
• Relaxation of social distancing
• Feeling that it’s over

Summary

Deaths are declining, hospitalisation admissions are low but possibly plateauing.

There has been a (small) increase in transmission since mid-July but first week of August saw transmission drop (a bit). Good news! But we have had 3 days since Sunday with daily cases over 1,000*.

We welcome government move to shift contact tracing efforts to local authorities but how it’s actually going to work, lines of responsibility, and allocation of resources all unclear. Also don’t know how weekly progress will be reported.

We believe the government priority should be to continue driving down infections to enable schools to fully open in September.

The good news is that this is achievable – but government relaxing measures further is exactly the wrong approach.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO TO KEEP SCHOOLS OPEN?

Keeping schools closed harms ALL children, but disproportionately affects children from deprived backgrounds and areas.

• Children will have been out of school for *six months* by the time (and if) they return in September

• But that also means the government in the 4 nations have had 6 months to prepare for return to schools

• It’s not just a question of returning to schools SAFELY but also ensuring that schools REMAIN OPEN.

• We’re in a better position now (compared to March 2020) to assess the evidence on COVID-19 risks associated with schools - and in particular the risk to the community of opening schools
What do we know so far from international evidence?

• The risk to children of COVID-19 is very low

• Where community transmission is low or controlled in a country as a whole, re-opening of schools has little effect of increasing spread of COVID-19 nationwide

• BUT at local level re-opening schools can result in a local outbreak or cluster of infections

• This is because school reopening enhances the chances of a “super-spreading event” i.e. many people mixing over prolonged periods of time in a confined space

• Where levels of local infection are low, this is less of a concern, but in local hotspots, a single infected person can spread to many others.
IndieSAGE 5 steps to reopening schools safely and ensuring schools stay open

1. **Reduce the level of virus circulating in the community** – this means recognising the impact of reopening other places e.g. pubs, casinos on coronavirus spread. Schools reopening MUST be a top priority.

2. **Ensure that outbreaks in schools and their local communities are identified early and controlled rapidly.** This requires a robust and local Find, Test, Trace, Isolation and Support (FTTIS) infrastructure. Effective contact contracting has been a serious weakness of centralised system.

3. **Provide detailed guidance based on case studies/real life scenarios and substantial extra resources** to ensure schools can minimise spread. Guidance should include risk assessments for schools, staff and students, including for BME groups & deprived areas.

4. **Leave no child behind** – lockdown has widened existing inequalities. This needs to be addressed & minimised through contingency plans and guidance with regards to further school closures – particularly in deprived areas.

5. **Government and local authorities must ensure effective & clear communication and consultation** with headteachers, staff and parents and **co-create policies and measures** which take into account local circumstances and school and community concerns.