

September 2021 - New Governmental Covid Guidelines

The school has recently received updated Covid 19 Guidance from the Government:

Close contacts

Close contacts DO NOT need to self-isolate if they are;

- Younger than 18 years and 6 months
- Double vaccinated
- Part of an approved COVID 19 trial
- Not vaccinated due to medical reasons

This means all children (up to 18 and 6 months), and those staff who are fully vaccinated, can continue to attend school even if they have been identified as close contacts. These close contacts will be strongly advised to take a PCR test.

Contingency plans

Schools will continue to work with public health teams if there is a significant number of cases in a setting. If there is a significant number of cases public health may advise you to temporarily re-introduce face coverings and contingency (outbreak) plans should cover this.

Updated Contingency Framework

The contingency framework for education settings was updated on 17 August 2021

Managing coronavirus (COVID-19) in education and childcare settings - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

This now includes information on what circumstances might require consideration of additional action and steps to work through.

Thresholds for when advice should be sought from public health and extra action considered - For most education and childcare settings this is as follows, whichever of these thresholds is reached first:

- 5 children, pupils, students or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period;
- 10% of children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

When the thresholds are reached schools should review and check their existing testing, hygiene and ventilation measures and may seek additional public health advice which may include additional measures. They should also consider: -

- whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise, assemblies, or classes
- ways to improve ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort
- one-off enhanced cleaning focussing on touch points and any shared equipment

Possible additional measures set out in the framework (and which should be reflected in contingency plans as a possibility) include additional testing, temporary re-introduction of face coverings, possible limitation on residential visits, live performances, parental visits or transition visits.

Shielding can only be reintroduced by national government but contingency plans should take into account this possibility.