

Coronavirus Response and Planning

COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan 2021-2022

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The arrangements outlined in the document have been arrived at to ensure an accurate reflection of official and current guidance from the Department of Education (DfE), Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), and Public Health England (PHE). As such, the plan is founded on the DfE [Contingency Framework for managing local outbreaks of Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) in education and childcare settings, alongside the DfE [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](#), and aims to minimize any further disruption to our students' education whilst ensuring that the safety of our students, their families, our staff, and the community we serve remains paramount. The plan outlines what we will do if students or staff test positive for COVID-19, or if we are advised to take extra measures to help break chains of coronavirus transmission in the community.

The proportionate, protective measures outlined in this plan will only be invoked and implemented — in full or part — in response to recommendations provided by directors of public health (DsPH), Public Health England (PHE), South West Health Protection Team (SWHPT), and/or HM Government. Invoking the additional control measures outlined, as stated by the DfE, will 'only ever be considered as a last resort... and for the shortest amount of time possible':

- To help manage a COVID-19 'outbreak' within the school (i.e., five positive cases amongst students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely within a 10-day period).
- If COVID-19 infection rates in the community are extremely high, and other measures have failed to reduce transmission.
- As part of a package of measures responding to a 'variant of concern'.
- To prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

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1 Low risk of coronavirus transmission

1.1 This is when:

- 1.1.1 There are — and have been — no COVID-19 cases within the school for 10 school days. (Note that cases identified in the 'test-on-return' period at our asymptomatic test site (ATS) do not trigger extra measures.)
- 1.1.2 There is low community transmission; cases in [West Devon](#) and [Torridge](#) are low and/or stable.
- 1.1.3 There have been no recommendations from directors of PHE, or SWHPT, DHSC, or HM Government, to invoke any contingency measure.

1.2 Attendance is mandatory and the normal expectations and guidelines for attendance will resume, i.e., it is the parents/carers' duty to ensure that their children attend regularly, and it is the College's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.

1.3 Under such circumstances, to mitigate the risk of coronavirus transmission and spread within the school and thus our community no action will be necessary beyond continuing to implement the control measures required of all schools as specified by the DfE [Schools COVID-19 Operational Guidance](#), alongside other measures stipulated by HM Government and/or Devon County Council (DCC), and those retained and adapted by the school from the 2020-2021 academic year¹, namely:

- 1.3.1 Ensuring good hygiene (hand and respiratory) for everyone.
 - Students and staff must wash their hands regularly (with hand sanitizer provided), when entering college, when entering a classroom, before entering eating areas, and before using finger scanners in the refectory and sixth form hub.
 - Students and staff must follow the 'Catch it, bin it, kill it' code.
 - Unhygienic behaviour remains a significant issue and deliberate acts of transmission, e.g., spitting, will result in severe sanctions, including fixed term exclusions.
- 1.3.2 Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes.
- 1.3.3 Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated.
- 1.3.4 Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- 1.3.5 Maintaining safety protocols on public and school transport:

- If travel to college is by coach or taxi, students should clean hands before boarding, wear face coverings, and should sit next to other students in their year, or siblings.
 - If travel to college is by public transport, students must wear face coverings and — if seating is restricted — sit only in seats marked as available.
- 1.3.6 Permitting the voluntary wearing of face coverings in school.
- 1.3.7 Maintaining common layouts for all classrooms, except specialist spaces, with all desks (one desk for two students) arranged in rows and forward facing, with space maximized between them.
- All classrooms (including specialist spaces) will have a strict seating plan. Students must sit in the seat they are allocated, and only that seat. These seating plans will be recorded centrally to support effective and speedy liaison with Test & Trace if required.
- 1.3.8 Providing designated areas at lunch times, and at three separate venues for students in KS3, KS4 and KS5.
- 1.3.9 Continuing to undertake some events virtually.
- 1.3.10 Maintaining vigilance and ensuring that all staff enforce expectations, and routinely seek the cooperation expected of all families.
- 1.4 All measures will be kept under regular review and adapted in light of evidence, both in terms of public health and educational efficacy.

2 If a student or member of staff has coronavirus symptoms

- 2.1 As [defined by the NHS](#), this is when an individual has a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss of or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell.
- 2.2 In these circumstances, the individual should follow current public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#), namely:
- 2.2.1 Get a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test as soon as possible to check if they have COVID-19 and self-isolate, i.e., stay at home and not have visitors until the test result is known. (Note that if a student develops symptoms whilst at school, they will be isolated in school and parents/carers will be informed to collect and take home.)
- Parents/carers should notify the school of a student's absence in such circumstances, which will be recorded as 'circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' until the result of the PCR test is known.

- 2.2.2 If the PCR test is negative the individual can return to school (as long as the individual feels well).
- 2.2.3 If the PCR test is positive, see paragraphs 3.2.3 to 3.3.2.
- 2.2.4 Individuals living in the same household as the person with symptoms will not be required to self-isolate if they are: **fully vaccinated** (i.e., 'double-jabbed'), or below the age of 18 years and 6 months, or have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial, or are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons. Instead, they can continue to attend school.
- 2.3 We will provide remote learning for any student required to self-isolate, as per the [Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education \(England\) Temporary Continuity \(No.2\) Direction](#), and outlined in our [Remote Learning Policy](#).
- 2.4 We will continue to provide meals or lunch parcels for any student eligible for free school meals who is required to self-isolate while they are not attending.
- 2.5 When our more vulnerable students are required to self-isolate, we will maintain contact with parents/carers and, where appropriate, social workers and the local authority, to ensure that they can access our remote education provision and support while at home.

3 If a student or member of staff tests positive for COVID-19

- 3.1 This is when an individual has had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test or a positive PCR test (note all positive LFD tests must be confirmed by a PCR test).
- 3.2 In these circumstances, the individual should follow current public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#):
 - 3.2.1 Individuals with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus infection](#) and get a PCR test to confirm.
 - Parents/carers should notify the school of a student's absence in such circumstances, which will be recorded as 'circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' until the result of the PCR test is known.
 - 3.2.2 If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive LFD test, and is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the individual can return to school (as long as the individual feels well).
 - 3.2.3 If the PCR test is positive, the individual should self-isolate as required (i.e., from the day symptoms started, or the day of the test if there were no symptoms, and the next 10 full days).

- Parents/carers should notify the school of a student's absence in such circumstances, which will be authorized as illness.
 - We would also request that if the result is positive they will inform the school by contacting our attendance officer, Sarah Morewood who will code their absence correctly. This will help prepare the individual and/or parents/carers for contact from NHS Test and Trace, and to help us support NHS Test and Trace if required.
- 3.3 NHS Test and Trace will work with the student or member of staff who has tested positive or, depending on the age of the student, their parent/carer, to identify individuals who have been in close contact. A series of questions will be asked designed to identify who the individual has been in close contact with.
- 3.3.1 Parent/carers and/or the student will be asked to provide the contact details, if known, of any of the individuals (or their parents or carers) who have been identified as close contacts. NHS Test and Trace will then get in touch with these close contacts (or the school first for details) and provide appropriate advice.
- 3.3.2 Individuals living in the same household as the person who has tested positive will not be required to self-isolate if they are: [fully vaccinated](#) (i.e., 'double-jabbed'), or below the age of 18 years and 6 months, or have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial, or are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons. Instead, they can continue to attend school and will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a [PCR test](#).
- 3.4 We will provide remote learning for any student required to self-isolate, as per the [Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education \(England\) Temporary Continuity \(No.2\) Direction](#), and outlined in our [Remote Learning Policy](#).
- 3.5 We will continue to provide meals or lunch parcels for any student eligible for free school meals who is required to self-isolate while they are not attending.
- 3.6 When our more vulnerable students are required to self-isolate, we will maintain contact with parents/carers and, where appropriate, social workers and the local authority, to ensure that they can access our remote education provision and support while at home.

4 High or sustained increased risk of coronavirus transmission

- 4.1 This means that:
- 4.1.1 At least five students and/or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, have tested positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period, irrespective of transmission rates in the community.

- Note that groups of students and/or staff deemed ‘likely to have mixed closely’ will include those from a form group, a subject class, a friendship group mixing at breaktimes, a sports team, a group in an after-school activity, etc.
- 4.1.2 Transmission is rising in the community: cases in [West Devon](#) and [Torrige](#) have increased to relatively high levels, even if there have been no — or few (below 5) — COVID-19 cases within the school for 10 school days.
- 4.1.3 There have been recommendations from DsPH, or SWHPT, DHSC, or HM Government, to invoke contingencies.
- 4.1.4 Note that we will also seek public health advice at this level of risk if a single student or member of staff is admitted to hospital with COVID-19.
- 4.2 Attendance is mandatory and the normal expectations and guidelines for attendance will resume, i.e., it is the parents/carers’ duty to ensure that their children attend regularly, and it is the College’s responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence.
- 4.3 As such, actions additional to reviewing and reinforcing the testing, hygiene, and ventilation measures already in place as outlined in paragraph 1.3 will be necessary, and we will follow DsPH, SWHPT, DHSC and/or HM Government recommendations, including:
- 4.3.1 Temporary use of face coverings in communal areas and/or classrooms.
- 4.3.2 Limiting, adapting, or postponing certain face-to-face events, such as open days and evenings, transition or taster days, live performances, assemblies, etc.
- 4.3.3 Limiting visitors to the site, including parents and carers.
- 4.3.4 Limiting or postponing educational visits.
- 4.3.5 Reducing staffroom use and/or capacity.
- 4.3.6 Reviewing individual risk assessments with Clinically Vulnerable staff to discuss additional protection, e.g., use of face coverings in classrooms, reduction in movement between classes/groups, etc.
- Note that shielding remains paused and can only be reintroduced by HM Government, we will therefore adhere to national guidance on any reintroduction of shielding, which would only apply to those on the [shielded patient list](#).
 - If reintroduced or advised by DsPH and/or SWHPT, students on the [shielded patient list](#) may be required to learn remotely, and part of the risk assessment review of any member of staff on the [shielded patient list](#) will include the possibility of home working.
- 4.3.7 Increasing or reintroducing home or on-site testing by staff and students.

- 4.4 Should the need for implementation of such measures arise, we will communicate fully, and as swiftly as practicably possible with parents, carers and students, through: Principal's 'fortnightly focus' letters sent via email; notifications via email and social media; links to this document and any updates, and our updated Risk Assessment.
- 4.5 Any such additional actions taken will be kept under regular review and lifted as soon as the evidence supports doing so.

5 High and enduring risk of coronavirus transmission

- 5.1 This means that coronavirus transmission is high and enduring, i.e., is an 'extreme' case where actions have failed to break chains of transmission in school, or to suppress or manage a dangerous variant being transmitted in the community, or to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS:
 - 5.1.1 Despite the actions taken as indicated in the preceding sections, cases within the school continue to rise within a 10-day period.
 - 5.1.2 Transmission continues rising in the community: cases in [West Devon](#) and [Torridge](#) remain at relatively high levels.
 - 5.1.3 There have been recommendations from DsPH, or SWHPT, DHSC, or HM Government, to invoke contingencies.
- 5.2 Attendance is mandatory and the normal expectations and guidelines for attendance will resume, but as a last resort, and only on the advice of DsPH, attendance may be restricted.
- 5.3 As such, actions additional to — and adapted from — those outlined in paragraphs 1.3 and 4.3 will be necessary, and we will follow DsPH, SWHPT, DHSC and/or HM Government recommendations, most likely as a result of an Incident Management Team meeting, including:
 - 5.3.1 Only permitting essential visitors to school.
 - 5.3.2 Postponing all non-essential events.
 - 5.3.3 Holding all meetings virtually.
 - 5.3.4 Reviewing the timetable organization and structure to create fewer — and thus extended — lessons to reduce movement around the college and negate the potential for year group 'bubble' contact at lesson transition.
 - 5.3.5 Reintroducing staggered break and lunch times for year group 'bubbles', with eating spaces dedicated to year group 'bubbles' on a rolling basis to permit pre- and post-use cleaning.
 - 5.3.6 Assigning specific toilets assigned to year group 'bubbles'.

- 5.3.7 Reintroducing class form-group 'bubbles' in KS3, including movement of teachers to rooms rather than students.
- 5.3.8 Curtailing practical activities in Science, Technology and Music.
- 5.3.9 Postponing After School activities that involve our students unless attendees are exclusively in year group 'bubbles', including those delivered by external providers.
- 5.3.10 Restricting attendance to school and reintroducing remote learning.
 - Note that such a restriction will only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort, and will only be invoked on the advice of DsPH.
- 5.4 Should the need for implementation of such measures arise, we will communicate fully, and as swiftly as practicably possible with parents, carers and students, through: Principal's 'fortnightly focus' letters sent via email; notifications via email and social media; links to this document and any updates, and our updated Risk Assessment.
- 5.5 Any such additional actions taken will be kept under regular review and lifted as soon as the evidence supports doing so.