



# COVID Outbreak Management plan September 2021





## **Context**

The Department for Education published a [Contingency framework for education and childcare settings](#) in June and updated guidance in August [Schools COVID-19 operational guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) they describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of COVID-19 (including responding to variants of concern) in education and childcare settings, covering:

- the types of measures that settings should be prepared for
- who can recommend these measures and where
- when measures should be lifted
- how decisions are made.

Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs) can recommend measures described here in individual education and childcare settings – or a small cluster of settings – as part of their outbreak management responsibilities. Where there is a need to address more widespread issues across an area, ministers will take decisions on an area-by-area basis.

The government has made it a national priority that education and childcare settings should continue to operate as normally as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Measures affecting education and childcare may be necessary in some circumstances, for example:

- to help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within a setting
- if there is extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 in the community and other measures have failed to reduce transmission
- as part of a package of measures responding to a Variant of Concern (VoC)

All education and childcare settings should have outbreak management plans (sometimes called contingency plans) outlining how they would operate if any of the measures described in this document were recommended for their setting or area. This includes how they would ensure every child, pupil or student receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled.

The framework identifies three principles for these outbreak management plans

- Prioritising education
- Collaboration
- Roles and responsibilities



### **Prioritising education**

The impacts of having missed education during the pandemic are severe for children, young people and adults. In all cases, any benefits in managing transmission should be weighed against any educational drawbacks.

Decision-makers should endeavour to keep any measures in education and childcare to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Decision-makers should keep all measures under regular review and lift them as soon as the evidence supports doing so.

Measures affecting education and childcare settings across an area should not be considered in isolation, but as part of a broader package of measures.

Attendance restrictions should only ever be considered as a last resort.

Where measures include attendance restrictions, the Department for Education (DfE) may advise on any groups that should be prioritised.

The government will try to give as much notice as possible of any changes to the way settings should operate.

### **Collaboration**

Multi-agency collaboration and communication is important in ensuring consistency in approach across England wherever issues occur, so that no group of children, pupils or students is unfairly disadvantaged.

Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and DfE's regional school commissioners should maintain close working relationships through their regional partnership teams (RPTs). These teams are made up of:

- Public Health England (PHE) regional directors
- Contain regional convenors
- Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) regional leads

Where decisions about measures in education and childcare settings are made at a national level, DfE will work with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), JBC, NHS Test and Trace, the Chief Medical Officer, PHE and other government departments, as well as relevant local authorities and directors of public health. The government will take into account the available evidence and the judgement of public health professionals.

### **Roles and responsibilities**



Local authorities, directors of public health (DsPH) and PHE health protection teams (HPTs) are responsible for managing localised outbreaks. They play an important role in providing support and advice to education and childcare settings.

Local authorities, DsPH and HPTs can work with their regional partnership teams (RPTs) to escalate issues from the local level into the central Local Action Committee command structure. RPTs support local areas in managing outbreaks and provide advice and insights from across the country to the Chief Medical Officer and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to inform decision making.

Through the Local Action Committee command structure, ministers consider and take decisions on measures on an area-by-area basis in light of all available evidence, public health advice and the local and national context.

In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to escalate issues to ministers through other central government committees (for example incident management teams), but this should be by exception only.

#### **Measures that settings should plan for**

The contingency framework describes the measures that all education and childcare settings should have in their outbreak management plans outlining how they would operate if any of the measures described below were recommended for their setting or area.

This includes how they would ensure every child, pupil or student receives the quantity and quality of education and care to which they are normally entitled.

#### **Testing**

As a primary school, we have not been required to introduce an Asymptomatic Testing Site. We will continue to support all staff by providing home testing kits.

#### **Face Covering**

Staff will continue to wear face coverings in communal areas where social distancing cannot be guaranteed and on the school playgrounds when greeting or dismissing children in line with our risk assessment.

#### **Shielding**

We will adhere to national guidance on the reintroduction of shielding, which would apply to those on the shielded patient list (SPL).

We will speak to individuals required to shield about additional protective measures in school or arrangements for home working or learning.

Other measures

#### **If recommended, we will limit:**



- Residential educational visits








- Open days
- Transition or taster days
- Parents coming into school
- Live performances/whole school assemblies

#### Procedures for dealing with COVID cases

Community Covid Risk	Description	Actions
 <p><b>Low Community Transmission. No School Cases.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been no cases of Covid within school for 10 school days.</li> <li>• Cases of Covid locally are low and/ or stable.</li> <li>• Hospitalisation/ Deaths due to Covid nationally are low.</li> </ul>	<p>No Covid measures are necessary beyond:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminding children of good hand-hygiene.</li> <li>• Ensuring good ventilation encouraged where practical.</li> <li>• Ensuring Children / Staff to stay at home if they have Covid Symptoms (and to book a PCR test).</li> </ul> <p>Staff will continue to test themselves using Lateral flow tests.</p>
 <p><b>Rapidly Rising Community Transmission</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No current Covid cases have been recorded at school, but...</li> <li>• Cases of Covid are rising rapidly in the community causing disruption to other local schools.</li> <li>• Sandwell Public Health / Public Health England issue warnings of expected local/ national infection wave.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ventilation of classrooms increased &amp; hand-washing supervised.</li> <li>• Large indoor public performance audience numbers reduced.</li> <li>• Staff-room capacity is reduced.</li> <li>• Whole-school assemblies are replaced with Key Stage assemblies.</li> <li>• Clinically Vulnerable staff meet with Line-Managers to review their individual risk assessment &amp; discuss additional protection (e.g. use of face coverings, reduction in movement between classes/ groups).</li> </ul>



 <p><b>A single child tests Positive</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A single child tests positive for Covid in a class.</li> <li>• There are fewer than 5 cases in the year group.</li> <li>• No other year groups are affected.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child self-isolates for 10 days. Remote learning will be provided if they are well enough to complete it.</li> <li>• The parents of the child are contacted directly by NHS Track and Trace to establish likely contacts.</li> <li>• Likely contacts will be contacted by NHS Track &amp; Trace and advised to book at PCR Test. The school will contact parents to advise this if close contacts are known.</li> <li>• <b>Children do not need to miss school or self-isolate whilst they wait for the result of the PCR test unless they have Covid Symptoms.</b></li> </ul>
 <p><b>5 children or staff within a year group test positive within 10 days of each other.</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>3 children or staff in a single Class/ Club (or Resource Base) within 10 days.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been 5 cases of Covid across a year group within 10 days which could mean that Covid is spreading within that group of children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>As above for each positive case.</b></li> <li>• The school will discuss the outbreak with Sandwell Public Health and agree strengthening protective measures <u>for 10 school days</u>, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adapting, Limiting or postponing indoor sporting events, trips, open days and performances.</li> <li>○ Reverting to video-link Assemblies in classrooms.</li> <li>○ Reducing the amount of classes staff work across.</li> <li>○ Resuming twice-weekly Staff Lateral flow testing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
 <p><b>Covid cases continue to increase rapidly within a 10 day period*</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the measures indicated above, Covid cases within the school continue to rise within a 10 day period with multiple classes and staff affected, suggesting that Covid is spreading widely throughout the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident Management Team meeting held between the school and Sandwell Public Health to agree further measures, <u>for a further 10 school days</u>, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Re-introducing class bubbles.</li> <li>○ Reverting to class-based school lunches or staggered lunchtimes.</li> <li>○ Limiting all non-essential visitors to school.</li> <li>○ Postponing all non-essential events.</li> <li>○ <b>Re-introducing remote learning for individual classes for 10 school days considered.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



**The school will inform parents of any changes to Covid measures should these be needed.**

**Actions if cases continue to increase rapidly\***

**Attendance restrictions**

Attendance restrictions will only be recommended as a last resort. If recommended, we will implement the measures in this section.

**Eligibility to remain in school**

In the first instance, we will stay open for:

- Vulnerable pupils
- Children of critical workers
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils

**If further restrictions are recommended, we will stay open for:**

- Vulnerable pupils
- Children of critical workers

**Education and support for pupils at home**

All other pupils will be required to stay at home and will receive remote education. We will aim to deliver remote education that meets the same quality and quantity of education that pupils would receive in school, as outlined in our remote learning policy.

The school will continue to provide lunch parcels for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals while they are not attending school because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines. These will be available for parents to pick up in a “drive through” fashion, from the kitchen window.

**Wraparound care**

We will limit access to before and after-school activities and wraparound care during term time to those that need it most.

We will communicate who will be eligible to attend once the restrictions are confirmed.

**Safeguarding**

We will review our child protection policy to make sure it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective.

We will have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding on site.



If attendance restrictions were needed, Grove Vale Primary School will continue to have regard to all statutory safeguarding guidance that applies to them, including:

- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)
- [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\) framework](#) - read alongside [Early years foundation stage: coronavirus disapplications](#)

**September 2021**

