

Mount Carmel Outbreak Management Plan

From 1 September 2021, we opened to all pupils following the latest government guidelines to ensure they have the best possible care and keep staff and pupils as safe as reasonably possible during the ongoing pandemic as well as prioritising the delivery of the most effective education

OVERALL SCHOOL AIM:

To continue to provide effective education and support for all pupils attending Mount Carmel RC High School during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis whilst also having effective plans in place to minimise risks of the spread of COVID-19 within our school and wider community.

SCHOOL OUTCOMES:

1. To outline how the school will safely respond to a COVID-19 outbreak (using government criteria) – updated 27th August 2021
2. To outline how the school will continue to provide education and support if there is an outbreak in pupils, their communities and / or staff
3. To ensure the logistics for on-site school provision is safe for all concerned and constantly updated in line with the latest DfE and school COVID-19 risk assessments

This school plan is based on the latest DfE guidance included in the school risk assessment.

This plan continues to be reviewed by senior leaders and governors based on latest COVID infection rates within school and the local community. The next planned review will be undertaken with changes for after the next governmental review at the end of December 2021.

Our Mission:

Mount Carmel is the Roman Catholic High School serving the people of Hyndburn. With Christ at the heart of our community, we believe in the worth and dignity of each individual. Our aim is to nurture their gifts and talents by providing a caring, challenging and stimulating environment in which effective teaching and learning takes place. We seek to encourage our pupils to witness Christ's teaching and to participate in building the Kingdom of God.

This mission is never more important than during this time of national emergency, when our pupils have experienced a lengthy gap in on site education resulting in potential gaps in education as well as potentially experiencing a negative effect to their mental and physical health. Many of our pupils are already disadvantaged and we must ensure that any gaps in knowledge are closed at the earliest opportunity. We also have a high proportion of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. It is important work we have been entrusted with and we will rise to the challenge.

This plan should be read in conjunction with the most recent school COVID-19 risk assessment, ventilation survey and school policy.

Steps taken by the school to ensure the chance of an outbreak is minimalised

Before all pupils returned to school at the beginning of September, they will carry out 2 lateral flow tests on site. The results of these are to be kept centrally to ensure maximum available coverage. The school has continued to work hard to ensure consents are sought from parents and the number of parents who have refused consent is less than 2% of the school population.

Once the initial lateral flow tests have been carried out, pupils will be encouraged to test each Monday and Thursday to ensure cases are caught quickly. The same testing regime is also in place for staff.

The HT has continued his weekly video messages to parents. Encouraging pupils to regularly use LF tests twice weekly for asymptomatic cases and a PCR test for pupil and staff who show symptoms are high profile.

What will occur when cases are identified?

In the event of cases being identified, the school will follow the guidance as set out by the government. We will inform parents where we suspect their child has been a close contact and will advise them to take a PCR test.

What if there is a suspected outbreak at the school?

In the event of a suspected outbreak at the school, the County COVID-19 helpline (01772 531555) will be called and advice taken on the most reasonable steps to take to manage this suspected outbreak.

Are face coverings required in school?

As of the 1 September 2021, face coverings are optional for staff, visitors and pupils. In the event of an outbreak or suspected outbreak, this will be reviewed after advice has been taken from County.

Will pupils be in 'bubbles'?

Latest government guidance has removed the need for pupils to be in consistent bubbles. Therefore, pupils will be in groupings that allow the most effective education to be delivered. If there is an outbreak, the school will take advice from County as to whether 'bubbles' of some description will be reintroduced. There will still be increased hygiene measures in school based on ventilation as well as good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Will schools continue to be responsible for 'track and trace'?

The latest guidance from the government has removed schools' responsibilities for track and trace, however the school will still advise parents to take their children for a PCR test if they are in the same class as a child who has tested positive for COVID-19. The school will work with Track and Trace when asked in order to facilitate the national COVID response.

How long would outbreak measures be in place for?

The school will work with County to ensure any outbreak is appropriately managed. The number of cases will be shared with County and the length of the outbreak measures will generally last from 28 days after the outbreak has been brought under control.