



Outbreak Management Plan – September 2021

Introduction and Background

This plan is based on the DfE's Contingency Framework which lays out how to manage local outbreaks of COVID-19. The guidance states schools should have contingency plans describing what they would do if children and staff test positive for COVID-19, or how they would operate if they were advised to reintroduce any measures to help break chains of transmission.

The contingency framework states that councils, directors of public health and Public Health England health protection teams can recommend certain measures for individual schools or clusters of settings.

It may be necessary to implement these measures in the following circumstances:

- To help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within the school
- 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' (VoC)
- To prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

Seeking public health advice

Senior leaders will seek additional public health advice if they are at all concerned about COVID-19 transmission in the setting. They will phone the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1) as well as seeking advice and guidance from the local authority (COVIDschoolenquiries@gloucestershire.gov.uk), and local health protection team (Healthprotection@gloucestershire.gov.uk).

We will immediately seek public health advice if a pupil or members of staff is admitted to hospital with COVID-19 by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1). This is because hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern.

In line with government guidance, we will also seek public health advice if one of the following thresholds is reached:

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

We will also seek advice if we are having problems implementing control measures described in our risk assessment or have applied the control measures and are still seeing a significant rise in cases.

The school will also phone the Self-isolation Service Hub on 020 3743 6715 as soon as we become aware that any of our staff have tested positive.

Whilst carrying out the actions described above, if one of the thresholds outlined above is reached, we will immediately:

- review and reinforce testing, hygiene and ventilation measures that we already have in place
- consider whether any activities could take place outdoors, including exercise, collective worship, or classes



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- reflect on ways to improve ventilation indoors, where this would not significantly impact thermal comfort
- instigate a deep clean focussing on touch points and shared equipment.

If and when outbreaks occur, we will work with the local health protection team (Healthprotection@gloucestershire.gov.uk) to identify any additional control measures that may be necessary.

Additional actions that could be advised by public health experts

1) Testing

Because testing is critical for identifying positive cases of COVID-19 early and ensuring that people isolate as soon as possible, all staff will be encouraged to test themselves using a LFD twice a week at home until the end of September, when this will be reviewed by the government.

The use of home testing by staff will be increased if this measure is recommended by our local Public Health team, Public Health England (PHE) health protection team, the DfE or the government. We will make ensure that we have sufficient stocks of lateral flow test kits for staff should this situation arise.

Staff who test positive should isolate and take a confirmatory PCR test within 48 hours. They must continue to isolate if the result is positive and update the school. The staff member must liaise with NHS test and trace to identify close contacts and follow PHE advice.

If, following a positive lateral flow test, the confirmatory PCR test is negative, they should attend school as normal, as long as they do not have COVID-19 symptoms.

2) Face coverings

If recommended, staff and visitors who are not exempt from wearing a face covering will temporarily be advised to wear face coverings when moving around indoor communal spaces where social distancing is difficult to maintain. It is likely that this would be introduced for two weeks in the first instance, pending regular review.

Any educational drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings will be balanced with the benefits in managing transmission.

In line with government guidance, children of primary school age and early years children will not be advised to wear face coverings.

3) Shielding

In the event of a major outbreak or variant of concern that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers may agree to reintroduce shielding. Shielding would be considered in addition to other measures to address the residual risk to people on the SPL, once wider interventions are taken into account.

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

We will carry out a risk assessment and speak to individuals required to shield about additional protective measures in school or arrangements for home working or learning.



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Shielding can only be reintroduced by central government.

4) Other measures

If advised to do so, we will limit:

- Residential educational visits
- Open days
- Transition or taster days
- Parents coming into school
- Live performances (eg Collective Worship for parents)

Events may take place outdoors, be rescheduled, transferred to a virtual platform, or cancelled. Local authorities, Directors of Public Health and Health Protection Teams may recommend these precautions in individual settings or across an entire area.

In the case of residential visits, visit leaders will consider carefully if the educational visit is still appropriate and safe by consulting health and safety guidance materials (<https://www.e-visit.co.uk/Gloucestershire/eVisit/Login>).

5) Attendance restrictions

Children and staff who test positive for COVID-19 on a PCR test must isolate. We are therefore prepared to implement high-quality blended learning arrangements so that any child who is well enough to learn from home can do so. Our **remote learning policy** provides further information.

Under-18s, irrespective of their vaccination status, and double vaccinated adults will not need to self-isolate if they are a close contact of a positive case. They will be strongly advised to take a PCR test and, if positive, will need to isolate.

Attendance restrictions for people who have not tested positive for COVID-19 will only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort.

Temporary restrictions may be enforced:

- for individual settings, on public health advice in extreme cases where other recommended measures have not broken chains of in-setting transmission; or
- across an area, on government advice, in order to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS.

In all circumstances, priority will continue to be given to vulnerable children and children of critical workers to attend to their normal timetables.

If vulnerable children are absent from school during a period of restricted attendance, the school will contact the parent or carer and work in partnership with the local authority and social worker to explore the reasons for absence and discuss concerns. The discussion will focus on the welfare of the child and ensuring that they are able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home. The school will maintain regular contact with parents and carers if they



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continue to keep their child(ren) at home. This will involve phone calls and socially distanced visits to the home.

If, due to public health advice, we were forced to temporarily, completely close onsite provision, we will discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children with the local authority.

Where measures include attendance restrictions, DfE may advise on any other groups that should be prioritised. Under these circumstances, the senior leadership team will determine the workforce required onsite and if it is appropriate for some staff to work remotely. The school will have regard to the guidance on clinically extremely vulnerable people.

6) Remote Education

As with other periods of restricted attendance, we will provide a high-quality remote education for pupils who are not attending via Google Classroom and/or Tapestry. We will endeavour 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**.

7) School Meals

The school will continue to prioritise meals or lunch parcels for pupils eligible for benefits-related free school meals while they are not attending school because of COVID-19 isolation guidelines. We will share details of how these will be distributed immediately after a full or partial school closure.

8) Wraparound care

In line with the government guidance, we will limit access to Before and After-school Club and other after school clubs to those that need it most. We will communicate who will be eligible to attend once the restrictions are confirmed.

9) Safeguarding and designated safeguarding leads

If attendance restrictions are required, we will review our child protection policy to make sure that it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective. We will remain vigilant and responsive to all safeguarding threats with the aim of keeping vulnerable children safe.

Schools will aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible.

- If the DSL (or deputy) can't be on site, they can be contacted remotely via the school office - 01242 515778
- If the school office is closed, our DSL can be contacted on 07821 686527.

On occasions where there is no DSL or deputy DSL on site, a senior leader will take responsibility for coordinating safeguarding on site. We have a number of staff that are qualified to do so, see our **Safeguarding and Child Protection policy**, which can be accessed via our website, for further information.



10) Reducing contacts and mixing

Should a COVID-19 outbreak occur in an isolated pocket of our setting, we will work with outside agencies to try to limit the spread of the virus. If appropriate, this could result in bubbles being temporarily reintroduced in order to reduce mixing. It could also lead to the reinstatement of staggered start/finish times of the school day and restricting movement around school.

What we will do if a large number of students need to go home and isolate

1. Inform families that they need to collect their child(ren) from school as soon as possible via text message
2. Ensure that the children take home the equipment that they need for remote learning e.g. their class novel
3. If possible, remote learning devices (chrome books/laptops) will be sent home with individuals that require them. If circumstances do not allow this, we will contact families that need the technology via telephone in order to organise the collection or delivery of a device.
4. Home learning will be posted on Google Classroom/Tapestry from the beginning of the next school day. See our **remote learning policy** for further information.
5. Ensure procedures are in place to maintain contact and welfare checks. Families will receive regular updates from school during the period of isolation.

If forced to employ the contingencies outlined above, decision-makers will keep all measures under review and lift them as soon as the evidence supports doing so.