

Thursday 24 June 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope and trust that you are well and are keeping safe.

In light of the increased rate of coronavirus transmission (evident notably in school age children and young adults), the significantly increased levels of disruption schools are facing both nationally and regionally, and [HM Government's confirmation](#) that the further lifting of COVID restrictions has been paused by 4 weeks, we are writing to update you and ask for your continued support in helping us in our efforts to mitigate the spread of coronavirus transmission in our community, and take the necessary precautions to help keep everyone safe.

Whilst it is now expected that England will move to [Step 4](#) of HM Government's 'roadmap out of [lockdown](#)' on 19 July, England [remains in Step 3](#), with the data on coronavirus transmission due for review in two weeks. As such, all schools are still required to adhere to a system of control actions regarding 'prevention' of transmission of coronavirus and regarding our 'response to any infection' — as laid out in the [DfE coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Operational Guidance](#) for schools, as we have outlined in our coronavirus response plan and associated risk assessments, and as we reiterated in summary via our letter of 28 May. HM Government have also stated that the move to Step 4 will be confirmed one week in advance. And we will, of course, ensure that you are kept up to date with any changes to the restrictions as they apply to schools.

Face Coverings

In our email communication of 14 May we confirmed that in line with [Step 3](#) of HM Government's 'roadmap out of lockdown', our students, along with students across the country, were no longer required to wear face coverings in classrooms or communal areas such as corridors and dining rooms. Since then, the transmission and spread of coronavirus has markedly increased via the highly transmissible Delta B.1.617.2 variant of the COVID-19 virus. As such, until further notice and unless exempt, with effect from tomorrow Friday 25 June we are reinstating the requirement that all students and staff wear face coverings in corridors, communal areas, and in classrooms unless social distancing can be maintained (for example, a teacher when teaching from the front of a classroom more than 2m away from students). All secondary schools across our Trust family are reinstating this requirement, and we will keep the policy under regular review and inform you, of course, of any changes. All students must continue to wear a face covering on public transport to and from school, and, in accordance with advice from Public Health England, when travelling on dedicated transport to and from school (unless of course they are exempt).

If your child is exempt, and you have already informed us, we have this on record and students have been provided with an exemption card and/or badge. If you have not already informed us, please inform us by [completing this short online form](#).

Asymptomatic coronavirus testing at home

As you know, as part of the [asymptomatic coronavirus testing](#) programme, students and staff have been taking Lateral Flow tests for COVID-19 at home twice a week every 3-4 days to help manage the spread of coronavirus. To date we have received notification of around 11,000 test results, and we would like to thank you, sincerely, very much for conscientiously participating in this testing programme. Members of a household of a student or staff are also advised to take these twice-weekly tests at home, as outlined [here](#).

We have noticed in recent weeks a fall in the number of test results being reported to us. To ensure that we do everything we can to keep our community safe, we reiterate here the importance that these tests continue to be taken, and that you report the results to us via [this brief online form](#). We check this information daily in order that we may find and isolate any positive cases, and thus help manage the spread of coronavirus in our community. We advise students to take the tests on Monday mornings each week before coming to school, or Sunday evenings if this is not practicable, and then again on Thursday mornings or Wednesday evenings. Results — whether void, positive or negative — must also be reported to NHS Test and Trace, either [online](#) or by telephone (as provided in the home test kit instructions) as soon as the test is completed.

- Students aged 11 should be tested by an adult. Students aged 12 to 17 should self-test and report with adult supervision. (The adult may conduct the test if necessary.) Students aged 18 and over should self-test and report the result, with assistance if needed.
- If the LFD test provides a negative result, no further action is required.
- If the LFD test provides a positive result:
 - ⇒ The student must isolate immediately, in line with current [guidance](#), along with household members.
 - ⇒ Contacts will be identified by the school and/or NHS Test and Trace and will be advised to isolate.
 - ⇒ A lab-based polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test must be arranged (either [online](#) or by calling 119) and taken within 2 days to confirm the result.
 - ⇒ If the PCR test is positive, the student and contacts must continue to isolate for the required period.
 - ⇒ If the PCR test is negative, it overrides the LFD test, and the student and contacts can end their isolation.

Contact Tracing

If any student tests positive, to help us support the NHS Test and Trace process and again manage the spread of coronavirus transmission in our community, we would also be grateful if parents and carers would complete [this brief survey](#) to provide the detail necessary for us to identify contacts and advise isolation.

I repeat below, for your convenience, the updated definitions of 'contact' that we must adhere to ([full source detail can be accessed here](#)):

- In short, a 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic (or date of test if the person was asymptomatic) up to 10 days from onset of symptoms (or date of test) — i.e., when they are infectious to others.
- Being in 'contact' with a person who has tested positive means:
 - ⇒ Face-to-face contact within 1m.
 - ⇒ Contact within 1m without face-to-face contact for 1 minute or longer.
 - ⇒ Contact within 2m for longer than 15 minutes (either as a 'one off' or in total over the course of a day).
 - ⇒ Travel with the person who has tested positive in the same vehicle.

Attendance

Whilst attendance to school is mandatory — meaning that the [usual rules](#) on attendance will apply and that students 'of compulsory school age must be in school unless a statutory reason applies' — students, staff and other adults must continue to adhere to [isolation requirements](#) and not come into the school if they have one or more coronavirus symptoms, if a member of their household has coronavirus symptoms, if they are required to quarantine having recently visited countries outside the Common Travel Area, or if they have had a positive test.

Where students are not able to attend school because of 'clinical or public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19), the absence will not be penalised.' Moreover, we will provide remote education to such students, i.e., those 'who are unable to attend school because they are complying with government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19).' (Detail on how schools must record attendance in relation to coronavirus can be viewed [here](#).)

We thank you in advance very much again for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any further information in the meantime.

As ever, keep safe, and keep looking after yourself and each other.

Yours sincerely,



Craig Griffiths and Rebecca Mullins
(Associate Principals).



Important

Advice for schools

CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN

A CHILD WHO DEVELOPS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A POTENTIAL CORONAVIRUS CASE:



NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH

This means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if the child usually has a cough, it may be worse than usual)



FEVER (TEMPERATURE OF 37.8°C OR HIGHER)

The child will also feel hot to touch on their chest or back



A LOSS OR CHANGE TO SENSE OF SMELL OR TASTE

this means the child has noticed they cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

MOST CHILDREN WITH CORONAVIRUS HAVE AT LEAST ONE OF THESE SYMPTOMS.



If a child is unwell with one or more of these specific symptoms they should be told not to come into school or sent home as soon as possible and advised to get a coronavirus test. **ONLY** those children with one or more of these symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test.



Children reporting other symptoms such as a headache, sore throat, runny or sniffly nose, earache, itchy eyes, lethargy or tiredness **WITHOUT** a fever should **NOT** be treated as potential coronavirus cases or advised to take a test.














If the national guidance on symptoms of coronavirus in children changes, updated information will be provided at a local level as soon as possible. This information about coronavirus symptoms in children can be shared with all school teaching and administration staff as well as parents and carers where necessary.

For further guidance on coronavirus testing for schools, please read the letter from PHE and NHS Test and Trace to school and college leaders at: bit.ly/phe-schools

COVID-19: Restrictions in England

From 17 May

STEP 3

MEETING OTHERS  <p>You can meet outdoors in groups of up to 30 people. You can meet indoors in groups of up to six people or two households.</p> <p>You don't have to stay 2m apart from friends and family, but consider the risks to you and those you are with.</p>	OVERNIGHT STAYS  <p>Domestic overnight stays are allowed, in groups of up to six people or 2 households.</p>	EDUCATION  <p>Schools, colleges and universities fully open.</p> <p>Regular testing provided.</p>	WORK AND BUSINESS  <p>You should continue to work from home if you can.</p>
RETAIL AND PERSONAL CARE  <p>Open.</p>	BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS  <p>Open.</p> <p>Groups of up to six people or two households allowed indoors.</p> <p>Groups of up to 30 allowed outdoors.</p>	ACCOMMODATION  <p>All holiday accommodation open, including hotels, hostels and B&Bs.</p>	LEISURE AND SPORTS FACILITIES  <p>Open indoors and outdoors, including gyms, indoor sports facilities, swimming pools, saunas and steam rooms.</p> <p>Organised sport and group exercises allowed.</p>
ENTERTAINMENT  <p>Open indoors and outdoors, including cinemas, bowling alleys, zoos and theme parks.</p>	LARGE EVENTS  <p>Events, including live performances, business events and sporting events can proceed with capacity limits, indoors and outdoors.</p>	DOMESTIC TRAVEL  <p>Travel safely. Plan ahead and avoid the busiest times and routes if you can.</p>	OVERSEAS TRAVEL  <p>Check whether your destination is on the red, amber or green list. You should not travel to red and amber countries. If you are travelling to a green country, check the rules in your destination as testing or quarantine requirements may be in place.</p>
PLACES OF WORSHIP  <p>Open. You can attend in groups of 6 people or 2 households.</p>	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS  <p>Weddings, receptions, life events and wakes can take place with up to 30 attendees, indoors in a COVID-Secure venue, or outdoors.</p> <p>No limit on funeral attendees, subject to how many the venue can safely accommodate with social distancing.</p>	RESIDENTIAL CARE  <p>People who live in a care home can have 'low risk' visits out of the home without the need to isolate when they get back. Residents can also name up to five visitors.</p>	SHIELDING  <p>If you are clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) you do not need to shield, but should continue to take extra precautions such as shopping at quieter times of the day. You can follow the same advice on meeting friends and family as everyone else.</p>

For more information and detailed guidance visit:
gov.uk/coronavirus

COVID-19
Let's take this next step, safely.

