

Covid Outbreak Management Plan for Schools - September 2021

The Department for Education has published an [updated Covid-19 contingency framework](#) for schools, setting out what measures may be needed in response to local outbreaks. June 2021. This guidance provides our schools with an outline of how they would operate if any of the measures described in the DfE guidance were recommended for their setting or area.

In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak* in the setting our schools will consider the measures below as advised by PHE and the DfE in conjunction with the Osborne Trust Incident Management Team. The list below is not in numerical order and may be added to according to guidance received.

*An outbreak is defined as five or more pupils in the same year group (primary), or for secondary, five in the same form or five in the same class at any point.

Measure to consider	Actions to be taken or considered
Plans for Limiting Attendance	<p>Attendance restrictions will only ever be considered as a last resort. Restrictions on attendance may be advised by Public Health England for individual schools or clusters of closely linked schools, where pupils or staff have moved across our school sites. If attendance restrictions are required across an area, the government will publish “detailed operational guidance” for schools.</p> <p>If restrictions on pupil attendance are needed, our Headteachers/ Heads of Schools, supported by the Trust Incident Management Team, will determine the workforce required onsite and if it is appropriate for some staff to work remotely. This will be decided on an individual basis at a local level.</p> <p>As with previous periods of restricted attendance during the pandemic, our schools will continue to provide “high quality remote education” for all pupils or those not attending.</p>
Prioritisation of certain year groups	<p>The DfE said early years and primary settings should be “prioritised to continue to operate as normal”, although they may advise that other groups should be prioritised in some circumstances.</p> <p>If some attendance restrictions are needed in our primary schools the following will be prioritised for attendance in the school setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable children, • Children of critical workers, • Children in reception, year 1 and year 2 will still be allowed to attend. <p>If some attendance restrictions are needed in our secondary schools the following will be prioritised for attendance in the school setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable pupils • Children of critical workers, • Pupils in years 10, 11, 12 and 13 and other pupils who were due to take external exams this academic year will still be allowed to attend. <p>If attendance needs to be restricted further at either phase, vulnerable pupils and children of critical workers will still be able to attend.</p>
Plan for reintroduction of on-site testing	<p>On-site asymptomatic testing (ATS) will be reintroduced in our secondary schools as part of our outbreak plan, this action will be taken on advice from Public Health Thurrock/Essex or</p>

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	<p>the DfE. Reintroducing ATS will be agreed with schools at a local level but in consultation with the Trust Incident Management Team.</p> <p>We will also consider increasing the use of home testing by staff and students in secondary schools in the event of exponential rise in positive cases of COVID-19 in the area or setting.</p>
Face coverings	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive cases of COVID-19 in the local area and/or an outbreak in the setting the school leaders will consider adding the requirement to wear face coverings more widely in the setting, including whilst teaching in the classroom for staff and pupils as well as in communal areas, to the local Covid-19 risk assessment. This would be advised by local public health. In all cases <i>“any educational drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings should be balanced with the benefits in managing transmission.”</i> DfE</p>
Reintroduction of shielding	<p>Shielding for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable was paused earlier this year and this enabled the full return of all staff in our schools.</p> <p>Updated guidance in June 2021, stated that ministers could agree to reintroduce shielding <i>“in the event of a major outbreak or variant of concern that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list”</i>.</p> <p>In the event of shielding being reintroduced our schools will carry out risk assessments for all vulnerable individuals to enable them to work safely.</p> <p>Remote Learning will be used to enable staff who are shielding to teach or support learning with their pupils.</p>
Limits on trips and performances	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak in the setting our schools will limit or cancel residential trips, open days, transition or taster days, parental attendance in settings and school performances. Such action will be communicated as swiftly as possible with all interested parties but parent/carers will be advised of this potential action.</p>
Reintroduction of Bubbles	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak in the setting our schools will consider the reintroduction of all or some bubbles in their setting. This action will enable restrictions on contacts across the school.</p>
Limits on face-to-face meetings	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak in the setting our schools will move all meetings to TEAMs, unless in an emergency such as Social Care intervention.</p>
Limits on large gatherings, such as assemblies	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak in the setting our schools will cancel all assemblies in school and move them to a virtual platform such as TEAMs.</p>
Remote Learning	<p>In the event of an exponential rise in positive Covid-19 cases in the local area or an outbreak in the setting our schools, which leads to staff shortages remote learning through TEAMs or Google Classrooms will be established to ensure no learning is lost.</p>