

**SAPIENTIA**  
EDUCATION TRUST

# **Coronavirus Review and Guidance from 1 September 2021**

**Separate standalone guidance has been produced for our Wymondham based schools by Guy McCurley HSM**

**Date:** 24 August 2021

**Prepared by:** Chris Lloyd Health and Safety Officer

**Reviewed and updated:** 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021 by C Lloyd HSO

**Next review:** 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021

## **INTRODUCTION**

[The DfE guidance, Schools COVID-19 operational guidance updated 27 September 2021](#), sets out 4 systems of control-

- 1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone. This is hand and respiratory hygiene and the very limited use of PPE in certain situations. See Annex A below for further details.**
- 2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes. This should include regular cleaning of areas and equipment with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.**
- 3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.**
- 4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.**

This is reduction from the 9 systems of control from those expected of a school during the 2020 school year. The wording and detail of the systems partly accounts for this reduction. The most significant changes since the last school year are that the following systems of control are **no longer** seen as being required-

- **The use of face coverings.** (Still expected if using public transport/dedicated school transport and highly recommended in all indoor areas at schools experiencing a Covid outbreak)
- **Minimising contacts across the site and maintaining social distancing wherever possible.**
- **Shielding of clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) persons.** (The shielding programme for adults has now been removed and pupils previously considered CEV should attend school unless otherwise directed by a GP or clinician)

The fuller detail of measures to minimise contacts included such things as the use of year group or class bubbles, not sharing resources or equipment and associated cleaning if shared and limitations on singing, music and sports. The guidance no longer sets out these expectations.

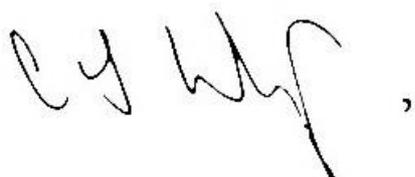
Head teachers do however have the discretion to retain such existing control measures as they consider appropriate for their setting.

This review identifies how schools will meet the 4 systems of control and provides an assessment of the adequacy of arrangements. It also serves to inform the schools Covid 19 risk assessments and any associated action plans.

Please note that where the word 'student' is used it also means 'pupils' in a younger years context.

Specific guidance for early years providers can be found [here](#).

In the event of a conflict, the contents of this guidance take precedence over any previous Coronavirus guidance issued.



Chris Lloyd

Health and Safety Officer

## **SYSTEM 1 - ENSURE GOOD HYGIENE**

1.1 Hand sanitising is available in all classrooms, offices and school vehicles on the premises.

1.2 Sanitising dispensers have been positioned at key locations such as in dining rooms and reception areas.

1.3 Standard facilities for hand washing with soap and water in washrooms and other areas continues to be available.

1.4 Frequent and thorough hand cleaning is an established practice. All students to be reminded of the practice regularly to counter Covid fatigue. The following [NHS video](#) serves as a useful reminder.

1.5 Respiratory hygiene is supported by the availability of tissues in classrooms, offices and other areas. Posters to remain on display in washrooms.

1.6 PPE is not routinely required for the care of school students. It is however available to first aiders and or other staff should a symptomatic person require close contact assistance or care. Should a boarder who has tested positive be unable to return home and require nursing care, there is sufficient professional expertise through the Medical Centre for this to be manageable.

**Summary:** the public awareness of the need for more frequent hand cleaning and for this to be a normal routine has not diminished since the end of last term. Schools have in place additional measures to support hygiene. This system of control therefore meets the expectations set out within the guidance.

## **SYSTEM 2 - MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE CLEANING REGIMES, USING STANDARD PRODUCTS SUCH AS DETERGENTS**

2.1 Cleaning routines were established during 2020 to achieve more targeted cleaning of touch points across our schools. This included where applicable the employment of additional cleaners and equipment. This targeted approach will continue.

2.2 Suitable cleaning materials were provided in each classroom for teaching and support staff to clean their workstation and resources as they consider necessary. This provision will continue.

2.3 The cleaning materials were purchased specifically for their suitability in combating Covid 19. These will continue to be used in preference to standard cleaning products.

2.4 Fogging machines were purchased and are in use at all schools. fogging continues to be employed as an enhanced cleaning measure.

**Summary:** enhanced cleaning will continue to be employed with a targeted approach to frequently touched points. Schools will communicate this approach to any external cleaning contractors. This system of control will be robust and will exceed the standard provided by the guidance.

### **SYSTEM 3 - KEEP OCCUPIED SPACES WELL VENTILATED**

3.1 The vast majority of classrooms have windows that may be opened.

3.2 Internal doors (not fire doors) can be kept open to allow for increased ventilation.

3.3 In large spaces such as the hall and gymnasium final exit doors can be opened to increase ventilation

3.4. Where rooms are served by mechanical ventilation or air conditioning units these are all subject to routine servicing.

3.5 Where a large-scale event is taking place, such as for CPD or parent evenings, the need for well ventilated spaces will form part of the planning.

3.6 Ventilation was a system of control employed during the 2020 school year. Staff are alert to the requirement for this.

3.6 The trust employs on site a maintenance teams at secondary schools and caretakers/estates staff serving primary schools who are able to address any defects relating to window openings or heating/air flow systems.

**Summary:** ventilation will continue to be employed as a system of control. This is an existing measure used during the last school year. As the weather gets colder a balance will need to be struck between ventilating rooms and providing enough heat to keep the ambient temperature in the room at a comfortable level. Guidance has been provided in this area previously and along with the Cold weather risk assessment is still relevant.

## **SYSTEM 4 - FOLLOW PUBLIC HEALTH ADVICE ON TESTING, SELF ISOLATION AND MANAGING CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID 19**

4.1 Schools have had experience of managing cases and have suitable protocols and arrangements in place.

4.2 The arrangements and protocols largely based around DFE recommendations have been tested and found to be suitable during the 2020 school year.

4.3 Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. However, in the event of a potential outbreak (5 or more positive cases with 10 days) schools are advised to contact Public Health England for advice by calling the DfE helpline on **0800 046 8687** and selecting option 1, then option 1 again.

Alternatively contact the Norfolk County Council outbreak management centre at; Tel: **01603 223219** email: [Phnorfolkcomc@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Phnorfolkcomc@norfolk.gov.uk)

In either case head teachers will have access to expert advice regarding what [contingency framework](#) measures may required on a case by case basis.

4.4 A system of self-testing of students at all trust secondary schools was implemented at the beginning of term to ensure that all students whose parents have provided consent took two lateral flow tests (3 to 4 days apart). Ongoing, students are expected to self-test at home twice a week until further notice. There is no need for primary age pupils (those in year 6 and below) to test.

4.5 Consenting staff should continue to test at home twice a week until advised otherwise.

4.6 Schools will need to keep a small asymptomatic test site (ATS) until further notice to test pupils unable to test at home.

4.7 Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the [stay at home guidance](#). They should also get a PCR test and continue self-isolating while awaiting the results. If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of a lateral flow test it overrides the individual and if negative can return to school as long as they do not have Covid symptoms.

4.8 Anyone who has previously tested positive on a PCR test should avoid taking another PCR or lateral flow test for 90 days **unless** Covid symptoms are present in which case a PCR test should be undertaken as soon as possible with the individual staying away from work in the meantime.

4.9 If you are

- under 18 years and 6 months old
- a fully vaccinated adult
- they have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- they are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

at the point when you have close contact with a positive case including household members, you will be exempt from any legal requirement to self-isolate when identified as a close contact.

Further details and FAQs on contact tracing and self-isolation can be found [here](#). Doc RP148.03 is essential reading and here [NHS test and trace how it works](#).

4.10 The trust HR department has issued all head teachers with a policy document regarding employee/employer interactions and information requests relating to an individual's vaccination status.

**Summary:** Schools continue to comply with the public health and associated care considerations as they have done so admirably to date. The testing arrangements and vaccination status of the majority of staff provide for a robust system of control as implied by the DfE guidance. However the trust is aware a number of Covid outbreaks have occurred at schools within the trust and head teachers are liaising with public health England to assess what additional measures should be implemented in addition to those already in place to bring the numbers of infections down. These additional measures could mean the return of individual measures such as:

- face coverings,
- bubbles
- social distancing and
- restrictions on visitors to the school

or a combination of them.

Schools implementing additional control measures must update their Coronavirus risk assessments accordingly.

For more information on what is required of school leaders in relation to health and safety risk assessments and managing risk, see the [health and safety advice for schools](#).

## ADMITTING CHILDREN INTO SCHOOL

If a parent or carer insists on a pupil exhibiting Covid symptoms attending your school, you can take the decision to refuse the pupil if, in your reasonable judgement, it is necessary to protect other pupils and staff from possible infection with COVID-19. Your decision would need to be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

## CONTRACTORS AND VISITORS

You should ensure that key contractors are aware of the school's control measures and ways of working. Should head teachers decide to continue imposing restrictions on access by parents and carers to the school buildings or grounds they will have the support of the trust.

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

From this term, you can go on international visits that have previously been deferred or postponed and organise new international visits for the future. You should refer to the [guidance on international travel](#) before booking and travelling and speak to either your visit provider, commercial insurance company, or the risk protection arrangement (RPA) to assess the protection available. Independent advice on insurance cover and options can be sought from the British Insurance Brokers' Association (BIBA) or Association of British Insurers (ABI). Any school holding ATOL or ABTA refund credit notes may use these credit notes to rebook educational or international visits.

You should undertake full and thorough risk assessments in relation to all educational visits and ensure that any public health advice, such as hygiene and ventilation requirements, is included as part of that risk assessment. [General guidance](#) about educational visits is available and is supported by specialist advice from the [Outdoor Education Advisory Panel \(OEAP\)](#)

## EVENTS

All events such as open days, parent evenings and performances should be risk assessed as standalone events to ensure appropriate Covid control measures are in place in line with the requirements outlined herein. The trust Health and Safety Officer is available to provide advice as required.

## FIRST AID/CARE OF SYMPTOMATIC PUPILS

Covid is still very much a threat therefore first aid trained staff should be given access to the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as specified in the Use of PPE section below when attending to symptomatic individuals.

Whilst social distancing requirements have been removed first aiders should try to assist at a safe distance from the casualty as much as you can. Minimise the time you share a breathing zone.

You must retain a Covid isolation room in the school - ideally one that can be adequately ventilated. Anyone monitoring symptomatic individuals prior to collection who are required to enter the room with them must as a minimum wear a fluid repellent surgical mask.

Further information on administering first aid during the Coronavirus pandemic including procedures for CPR can be found on the HSE website [here](#). In particular first aiders should “Only deliver CPR by chest compressions and use a defibrillator (if available) – don't do rescue breaths”.

## TRAVEL AND QUARANTINE

All pupils travelling to England must adhere to [travel legislation](#), details of which are set out in [government travel advice](#). Additional guidance has been issued on the [quarantine arrangements for boarding school pupils travelling from red-list countries to attend a boarding school in England](#).

From 4am Monday 4 October 2021, the rules for international travel to England will change. [Check the rules for travel to England from abroad](#) for more information.

Parents travelling abroad should bear in mind the impact on their child's education which may result from any requirement to quarantine or isolate upon return.

## USE OF FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings are no longer recommended for staff and visitors in classrooms, corridors or communal areas. You can find more information on [face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own](#).

The government has removed the requirement to wear face coverings in law but expects and recommends that they are worn in enclosed and crowded spaces where you may come into contact with people you don't normally meet. This includes public transport and dedicated school transport.

If however, your school has a substantial increase in the number of positive cases (see [local outbreaks](#) section for more information), the trust and/or Public Health England may recommend that face coverings are temporarily worn by staff, visitors and students (in secondary schools) in all indoor areas (unless exempt). You should make sure your contingency plans cover this possibility.

**Staff, students and visitors who wish to continue wearing a face covering at school or in their setting may continue to do so at their option.**

## USE OF PPE

Most staff in schools will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work.

Those circumstances where PPE should be used from commencement of the new school year will be as follows:

- 1) a pupil or staff member becomes ill with symptoms at school and a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained by the staff member monitoring the individual prior to departure from the setting or while relocating the student to the boarding isolation quarters. **Type IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask, Face visor**
- 2) Close personal contact when administering first aid to symptomatic individuals. **Type IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask, Face visor, Disposal gloves and plastic apron**
- 3) Staff are required to subdue an aggressive individual who is a danger to themselves and others and who exhibits behaviours including coughing and spitting directly at staff. **Type IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask, Face visor**
- 4) Non-contract\* cleaning staff required to undertake the first clean of an area occupied by a symptomatic and/or positive case. **Type IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask, disposable gloves and apron.**

- 5) Essential close contact is required by designated staff member when assigned to a vulnerable/SEND pupil in the classroom who exhibits behaviours that put staff at risk such as spitting and drooling uncontrollably. Type IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask or Clear fronted mask for those who work with students with hearing difficulties who rely on lip reading+ **TYPE IIR Fluid repellent surgical mask visor or clear mask as required.**

\*Contract cleaners such as Norse shall operate under their own risk assessment and direction on the use of PPE

+ Clear masks of [this design](#) are recommended.

## VACCINATION OF PUPILS

All children aged 12 and over are now eligible for COVID-19 vaccination. Those aged 12 to 17 are eligible for a first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, although 12 to 17 year olds with certain medical conditions that make them more at risk of serious illness, or who are living with someone who is immunosuppressed, are eligible for 2 doses. These children will be contacted by a local NHS service such as their GP surgery to arrange their appointments. All other 12 to 15 year olds will be offered the vaccine via the school-based programme. Young people aged 16 to 17 will be invited to a local NHS service such as a GP surgery or can [access the vaccine via some walk-in COVID-19 vaccination sites](#).

You can find out more about the in-school vaccination programme in [COVID-19 vaccination programme for children and young people guidance for schools](#).

For clarity and the avoidance of doubt

- we will only facilitate this, in the same way we do with other vaccination programmes
- it must be led and organised by the NHS team
- school staff must not be involved in any discussion or mediation relating to parental and/or pupil consent
- school staff are not trained to assess Gillick competence and must not advise, encourage or promote a particular viewpoint
- it is for NHS staff only to assess the circumstances around each pupil, to administer any jab and to communicate with parents/carers about consent, the process etc.

Should any parents question the school, please refer them to the NHS team and/or DfE guidance.

Legal accountability rests with the NHS and our staff must do nothing to blur any lines around this.

## WORKFORCE

School leaders are best placed to determine the workforce required to meet the needs of their pupils.

Social distancing measures ended in workplaces on 19 July and the government is no longer advising people to work from home.

The shielding programme has now come to an end and adults previously considered CEV should, as a minimum, continue to follow the same [COVID-19 guidance](#) as everyone else. It is important that everyone adheres to this guidance, but people previously considered CEV may wish to consider taking extra precautions. In some circumstances, staff may have received personal advice from their specialist or clinician on additional precautions to take and they should continue to follow that advice.

Employers should be able to explain the measures they have in place to keep staff safe at work. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published guidance on [protecting vulnerable workers](#), including advice for employers and employees on [how to talk about reducing risks in the workplace](#).

## WRAPAROUND PROVISION AND EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Out-of-school settings and wraparound childcare providers can offer provision to all children, without restriction on the reasons for which they may attend. This includes those pupils previously deemed CEV (unless otherwise directed by a GP or clinician).

You should ensure that extra-curricular peripatetic teachers, tutors and coaches are aware of your school's control measures and ways of working.

More information on planning extra-curricular provision can be found in the guidance for [providers who run community activities, holiday clubs, after-school clubs, tuition and other out-of-school provision for children](#).