

Covid 19 Outbreak Management Plan

The Government has made it a national priority that education and childcare settings should continue to operate as normally as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Introduction

Contingency plan for September 2021



The overarching objective is to maximise the number of children and young people in face-to-face education or childcare and minimise any disruption, in a way that best manages the COVID-19 risk.

The impacts of having missed face-to-face education during the pandemic are severe for children, young people and adults. In all cases, any benefits in managing transmission should be weighed against any educational drawbacks.

The school will endeavour to keep any measures in education and childcare to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

The school will keep all measures under regular review and lift them as soon as the evidence supports doing so.

Measures affecting education and childcare settings across an area should not be considered in isolation, but as part of a broader package of measures. Attendance restrictions should only ever be considered as a last resort.

Measures affecting education and childcare may be necessary in some circumstances, for example:

- to help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within a setting*
- as part of a package of measures responding to a Variant of Concern (VoC) or to extremely high prevalence of COVID-19 in the community*
- to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NH*

This document will be used by the school to assist in its planning if an outbreak occurs.

Responsibilities



Local authorities, DsPH and HPTs are responsible for managing localised outbreaks. They play an important role in providing support and advice to education and childcare settings. Local authorities, DsPH and HPTs can work with their regional partnership teams (RPTs) to escalate issues from the local level into the central Local Action Committee command structure. RPTs support local areas in managing outbreaks and provide advice and insights from across the country to the Chief Medical Officer and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to inform decision making. Through the Local Action Committee command structure, ministers consider and take decisions on measures on an area-by-area basis in light of all available evidence, public health advice and the local and national context. In rare circumstances, it may be necessary to escalate issues to ministers through other central government committees (for example incident management teams), but this should be by exception only.

Multi-agency collaboration and communication is important in ensuring consistency in approach across England wherever issues occur, so that no group of children, pupils or students is unfairly disadvantaged. Local authorities, DsPH and DfE's regional schools commissioners (RSCs) should maintain close working relationships through their regional partnership teams (RPTs). These teams are made up of:

- PHE regional directors
- Contain regional convenors
- Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) regional leads

Where decisions about measures in education and childcare settings are made at a national level, DfE will work with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), JBC, NHS Test and Trace, the Chief Medical Officer, PHE and other government departments, as well as relevant local authorities and DsPH. The Government will review the available evidence and take into account the judgement of public health professionals.

This contingency plan (sometimes called outbreak management plans) describes what we do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19, or how they will operate if they were advised to reintroduce any measures described in this document to help break chains of transmission.

At Lowbrook the Executive Headteacher Mr Rooney is responsible for this plan but may delegate some or all aspects of it at his discretion.

All settings should seek public health advice if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. They can do this by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1), or in line with other local arrangements. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. Settings may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

When we should consider extra action



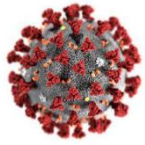
Lowbrook has a risk assessment in place to manage transmission of COVID-19 day to day.

For most settings it makes sense to think about taking extra action if the number of positive cases substantially increases. This is because it could indicate transmission is happening in the setting.

The thresholds, detailed below, are used by Lowbrook as an indication for when to seek public health advice if we are concerned. We will use whichever of these thresholds is reached first:

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

Actions to Consider



When the above thresholds are reached, we should review and reinforce the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures we already have in place. The school will use [Annex – Guidance for education & childcare settings on managing COVID-19 cases from autumn term 2021](#) and their prior risk assessments pre September 2021 to do this.

We will seek additional public health advice if we are concerned about transmission or meet the above thresholds in our in our setting, by phoning the DfE helpline **(0800 046 8687)**.

A director of public health or an HPT may give us advice reflecting the local situation. In areas where rates are high, this may include advice that local circumstances mean that the thresholds for extra action can be higher than set out above. If they judge that additional action should be taken, they might advise us to take some or all of the other measures described in this document.

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Actions to Consider for testing:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Testing</p> <p><i>All settings should ensure their contingency plans reflect the possibility of increased use of testing by staff and, where they are already being offered testing, for pupils and students.</i></p> <p><i>This could include advice on more frequent testing, or on the reintroduction of asymptomatic test sites (ATS) (where they have been stood down). These measures may be advised: • for an individual setting only, by DsPH as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management, or • for settings across areas that have been offered an enhanced response package or are in an enduring transmission area, where settings and directors of public health decide it is appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>These additional testing measures would need to be agreed with settings and we encourage DsPH to consult settings and work with them to identify what support may be needed to do this. Secondary schools and colleges should consider how ATS could be implemented in a way that does not negatively impact the education they provide to their pupils and students. DsPH should keep DfE informed of all cases where they are considering recommending ATS for an education setting, via their RPT and RSC.</i></p>	<p>Currently all staff test twice weekly.</p>	

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Actions to consider for face coverings:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Face coverings</p> <p><i>Education settings should make sure their contingency plans cover the possibility that it may be advised that face coverings should temporarily be worn in settings in their area. This may include face coverings in communal areas and/or classrooms, for pupils, students and staff. Children of primary school age and early years children should not be advised to wear face coverings. Any guidance should allow for reasonable exemptions for their use.</i></p> <p><i>These measures may temporarily be advised:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• for an individual setting only, by DsPH as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management, or</i><i>• for settings across areas that have been offered an enhanced response package, or are in an enduring transmission area, where settings and DsPH decide it is appropriate. In all cases any educational and wellbeing drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings should be balanced with the benefits in managing transmission.</i>		

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Actions to consider for Hygiene:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Hygiene</p> <p><i>The school should review the hygiene measures they have in place.</i></p>	<p>In the event of an outbreak the school will introduce the 5 a day handwashing Rota.</p>	

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Actions to consider for shielding:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Shielding</p> <p>Shielding is currently paused.</p> <p>In the event of a major outbreak or VoC that poses a significant risk to individuals on the shielded patient list (SPL), ministers can agree to reintroduce shielding. Shielding would be considered in addition to other measures to address the residual risk to people on the SPL, once the wider interventions are taken into account. Settings should make sure their contingency plans cover this possibility. Shielding can only be reintroduced by national government.</p>		

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Actions to consider for Social distancing:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Social distancing</p> <p>Social Distancing is currently paused.</p> <p>In the event of a major outbreak or VoC that poses a significant risk to individuals social distancing measures similar to those prior to 1st September opening may be imposed by ministers or agreed with DsPH.</p>	<p>Social distancing signs, tape and plans have all been retained in school in the event we have to reintroduce such measures.</p>	

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Limiting other activities:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Limiting activities:</p> <p><i>Other measures Settings should make sure their contingency plans cover the possibility they are advised to limit:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• residential educational visits• open days• transition or taster days• parental attendance in settings• live performances in settings Local authorities, <p><i>DsPH and HPTs may recommend these precautions in individual settings or across an entire area.</i></p>	<p>In line with Government advice no overseas trips are planned and individual risk assessments are carried out for each trip that specify Covid 19 mitigations.</p>	

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Attendance Restrictions:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p><i>Attendance restrictions</i></p> <p><i>High quality face-to-face education remains a government priority. Attendance restrictions should only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• for individual settings, on public health advice in extreme cases where other recommended measures have not broken chains of in-setting transmission; or</i><i>• across an area, on government advice in order to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS.</i> <p><i>In all circumstances, priority should continue to be given to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers to attend to their normal timetables. Where measures include attendance restrictions, DfE may advise on any other groups that should be prioritised. Settings should make sure their contingency plans cover the possibility they are advised, temporarily, to limit attendance and should ensure that high-quality remote education is provided to all pupils or students not attending.</i></p>		

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Remote Education:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Remote education</p> <p>High-quality remote learning in schools, further education and higher education settings should be provided for all pupils and students if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are well enough to learn from home; or• attendance at their setting has been temporarily restricted <p>On-site provision should in all cases be retained for vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers. If settings have to temporarily stop onsite provision on public health advice, they should discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people with the local authority. Full detail on remote education expectations and the support available to schools and FE providers is available at Get help with remote education.</p>	<p>The schools has a well developed and successful Remote learning plan.</p> <p>It uses the Google classroom format where all pupils who are isolating can engage and learn on live lessons. 100% of our pupils have access to this. Daily face to face lessons reflecting a broad and balanced curriculum are offered alongside face to face teaching at school for those identified as requiring onsite provision.</p> <p>Please refer to the remote education and lockdown plan for detail.</p>	

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Contingency for vulnerable pupils:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>Vulnerable children and young people</p> <p>Where vulnerable children and young people are absent, education settings should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow up with the parent or carer, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), to explore the reason for absence and discuss their concerns • encourage the child or young person to attend educational provision, working with the local authority and social worker (where applicable), particularly where the social worker and the Virtual School Head (where applicable) agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate • focus the discussions on the welfare of the child or young person and ensuring that the child or young person is able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home • have in place procedures to maintain contact, ensure they are able to access remote education support, as required, and regularly check if they are doing so If settings have to temporarily stop onsite provision on public health advice, they should discuss alternative arrangements for vulnerable children and young people with the local authority 	<p>These recommendations have been fully adopted by the academy. Should vulnerable children not have access to remote learning at home it is provided by the school. Currently 100% of children at Lowbrook have full access to remote learning when/if required.</p>	<p>1/09/21</p> <p>D Rooney</p> <p>L Berry</p>

Possible Contingency Actions by Category:

Provision for free school meals:		
DFE Guidance	Action Agreed	Date and actioned by:
<p>School and FE meals</p> <p><i>Schools should provide meal options for all pupils who are in school. Meals should be available free of charge to all infant pupils and pupils who meet the benefits-related free school meals eligibility criteria. Schools should also continue to provide free school meals support in the form of meals or lunch parcels for pupils who are eligible for benefits related free school meals and who are not attending school because they have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves. Further information is available in the guidance on providing school meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. FE providers should continue to support students who are eligible for, and usually receive, free meals, even if students are studying remotely due to COVID-19. This includes students in further education, who are newly eligible. There is further guidance on free meals in further education-funded institutions</i></p>	<p>This policy has been fully adopted by the academy. The schools works in conjunction with Caterlink and the parents to fulfil this provision. Where this is not possible the school provide vouchers using the LGS scheme to eligible parents.</p>	

The Annex – Guidance for education & childcare settings on managing COVID-19 cases from autumn term 2021 and further guidance can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1011704/20210817_Cocontingency_Framework_FINAL.pdf