



SAINT JOHN'S

Outbreak Management Plan

Spring 2022

Designated Member of Staff	Deputy Head Teacher
Committee with responsibility	Resources
Date of Issue	Spring 2022
Frequency of Review	As appropriate due to government guidance

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of Changes
1	October 2021	Changes due to rising cases locally
2	January 2022	PCR now not required after a positive LFT
3	February 2022	Reviewed in light of "Living with Covid" guidance

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 (sometimes called outbreak management plans) detailing how they would exceptionally and temporarily reintroduce any measures to minimise disruption to face-to-face teaching and protect the most vulnerable to COVID-19.

The [contingency framework](#) states that local authorities, directors of public health and health protection teams are responsible for managing localised outbreaks. They play an important role in providing support and advice to education and childcare settings.

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

- to help manage severe operational impacts or identified health risks of 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 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 seek 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 member 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:

- a higher than previously experienced and/or rapidly increasing number of staff or student absences due to COVID-19 infection
- evidence of severe disease due to COVID-19, for example if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital due to COVID-19
- a cluster of cases where there are concerns about the health needs of vulnerable staff or students within the affected group

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.

We will seek public health and operational advice by phoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687, option 1).

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, assemblies, or classes
- 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

Health protection teams might advise rapid lateral flow device (LFD) testing by some staff and pupils. This may apply to just our school, or across a number of schools and childcare settings if Directors of Public Health designate our locality as an enhanced response area. In these circumstances, Directors of Public Health will consult with the school to identify what support may be needed to do this, including test kit supply.

Pupils, staff and other adults with a positive test result should follow [UKHSA guidance](#) on whether to stay at home and avoid contact with other people.

2. Face coverings

Face coverings in communal areas may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by Directors of Public Health:

- for an individual setting, as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management
- for settings across areas where DfE and public health experts judge the measure to be proportionate, based on the evidence public health experts share with the DfE and specific local public health concerns. For example, where the area has been designated as an enhanced response area, and where COVID-19 risk may put exceptional local pressure on the healthcare system. This is a temporary measure.

Face coverings in classrooms and teaching spaces may temporarily, and exceptionally, be advised by Directors of Public Health for an individual setting, as part of their responsibilities in outbreak management.

Face coverings in classrooms and teaching spaces will only ever be recommended across an area if it has been designated as an enhanced response area by the Local Action Committee command structure.

Children of primary school age and early years children will not be advised to wear face coverings. No pupil or student will be denied education on the grounds of whether they are, or are not, wearing a face covering. We recognise that there are circumstances where people are not able to wear face coverings.

In all cases any educational and wellbeing drawbacks in the recommended use of face coverings should be balanced with the benefits in managing COVID-19 risk. Where recommended, the use of face coverings will be kept under regular review and lifted as soon as the evidence supports doing so.

3. Other measures

If advised to do so, we will limit:

- Educational visits
- Open days
- Transition or taster days
- Parents coming into school
- Live performances

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

4. Attendance restrictions

High-quality face-to-face education remains a government priority. Attendance restrictions will only ever be considered as a short-term measure and as a last resort:

- for individual settings, on public health advice in extreme cases of operational disruption to staffing or where other recommended measures have not mitigated against risks to face-to-face education
- across an area, on government advice in order to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS

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

Where measures include attendance restrictions, the Department for Education 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.

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 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.

Remote Education

High-quality remote learning will be provided for pupils if:

- they have tested positive for COVID-19 but are well enough to learn from home
- attendance at school has been temporarily restricted

As with other periods of restricted attendance, we will provide a high-quality remote education for pupils who are not attending via ClassDojo. 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, which can be found on the school website.

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.

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 523786. 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.

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 being reintroduced in order to reducing mixing. It could also lead to the reinstatement of additional mini staffrooms and timetabling of these spaces.

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 (iPads/tablets) 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 ClassDojo/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.