

# The Skylark Partnership

## COVID-19: outbreak contingency plan

Approved by:	Frances Jones	Date: 3.1.22
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Next review due by:	As and when the DfE guidance changes	

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### 1. Introduction

This plan is based on the [contingency framework for managing local outbreaks](#) of COVID-19 and the [schools operational guidance](#), published by the Department for Education (DfE). All recommendations outlined in Plan B from the government will also be adhered to.

As a result of the change in guidance, and the increase in infection rates due to the new Omnicom variant, we are making changes to our contingency plans. We will continue to respond to recommendations provided by our local authority (LA), directors of public health (DsPH), Public Health England (PHE) health protection team or the national government.

We are implementing the measures outlined below to:

- To help manage a COVID-19 outbreak within the academy.
- Contribute to keeping COVID-19 infection rates down in our community are extremely high
- As part of a package of measures responding to the Omnicom variant
- To prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS

### 2. Seeking public health advice

We will review the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures already in place and documented in our risk assessment.

We will continue to seek public health advice from a director of public health or health protection team. The Headteacher will be responsible for seeking this advice and will do so by telephoning the DfE helpline (0800 046 8687) or by emailing *local public health teams*.

In the hospital settings, advice will be sought from the matron/lead nurse on the wards.

### 3. Testing

We will reinforce the use of home testing by pupils and staff. We will test all pupils on their return in January and will consider if we reintroduce an asymptomatic testing site (ATS) at our academy. We will consult with the director of public health (DsPH) to discuss any further support we need to do this.

On-site asymptomatic testing will take place in the mornings when staff & pupils arrive. The testing station will be set up in each academy according to their normal arrangements and staff who have previously administered tests / completed training will be responsible.

Those who find it difficult to test at home prior to attending on site at the academy will have access to in-school testing.

Students should then be strongly encouraged to continue testing twice weekly at home and to [report all results to NHS Test and Trace](#) and to their setting.

Even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site through ATS or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection.

Since Wednesday 22 December, the 10 day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason.

Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion. If both these test results are negative, and the staff member/pupil does not have a high temperature, they may end their self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to their education setting from day 8.

If a variant of coronavirus classed as a variant of concern (VoC) e.g., Omnicom, is identified within the school's geographical area, the school will follow any measures required by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to help suppress and control any possible new cases, which may include targeted testing.

## 4. Self Isolation

Any member of the school community who displays symptoms of coronavirus will be required to self-isolate and encouraged to get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test. Tests can be booked online or ordered by telephone via NHS 119.

If a pupil develops symptoms of coronavirus while on site, they will be taken to a designated isolation area while they wait to be collected. If required, the pupil will be supervised while they await collection. If the supervising member of staff is unable to socially distance, e.g., due to the pupil's age or needs, they will wear PPE.

After the pupil has left the premises, any areas they were in will be cleaned. The pupil's parents will be encouraged to get their child tested with a confirmatory PCR test as soon as possible. The pupil will be required to self-isolate for 10 days or after 7 days, following 2 negative LFD tests taken 24 hours apart. The first LFD test should not be taken before the sixth day – remote education will be arranged for them immediately.

If a staff member develops symptoms while on site, they will be directed to go home immediately to self-isolate and to get a PCR test. Cover arrangements will be put in place.

Any staff members or pupils who have been in close contact with a symptomatic individual at school will not need to self-isolate unless they develop symptoms themselves. Instead, they are required to commence daily LFD testing for 7 days after contact. If symptoms start during the 7 days, or if there is a positive LFD result, they should self-isolate immediately and get a confirmatory PCR test. If the PCR is negative, the individual can stop self-isolating and resume the 7-day LFD testing. If the PCR is positive, please follow self-isolation rules above.

Fully vaccinated adults, and pupils under the age of 18, who have been identified as close contacts of a positive case via the NHS Test and Trace service, will not need to self-isolate unless advised by a healthcare professional. Individuals also do not need to self-isolate if:

- They live in the same household as someone who has tested positive for coronavirus, unless they develop symptoms themselves.
- 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.

Unvaccinated adults and adults who have only had one dose of the vaccine will need to continue to follow the rules on self-isolation if they have been identified as a close contact of a positive case.

Those aged 18 will continue to follow the same rules as under-18s until six months after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, when they will begin to follow the self-isolation rules for adults.

## 5. Additional measures

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If a pupil or staff member is admitted to hospital with coronavirus, the school will contact the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 and select option 1. The school may be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

It is important to think about taking extra actions if the number of positive coronavirus cases in the school substantially increases, as this could indicate that coronavirus transmission is happening in school.

The following threshold will be used as an indication of when to seek public health advice:

- Two children, pupils, students and staff who are likely to have mixed closely test positive for coronavirus within a 10-day period

When a threshold is reached, the school will review and reinforce the testing, hygiene and ventilation measures already in place. The school will also consider:

- Whether any activities can take place outdoors, e.g., exercise, assemblies, or classes.
- Ways to improve ventilation indoors that will not significantly impact thermal comfort.
- One-off enhanced cleaning, focusing on touch points and any shared equipment.

The DPH may provide the school with advice that reflects the local situation. In areas where rates of positive cases are high, this could mean that the thresholds for extra actions are higher than the threshold set out above.

If cases amongst staff meet one of the thresholds advised by the DfE, the school will provide the 8-digit NHS Test and Trace Account ID (sometimes referred to as a CTAS number) of the person who tested positive, alongside the names of co-workers identified as close contacts. This will ensure that all workplace contacts are registered with NHS Test and Trace and can receive the necessary public health advice, including the support available to help people to self-isolate.

The school will seek additional public health advice if there is concern regarding transmission in the school, either by phoning the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687 and selecting option 1 or in line with other local arrangements. The school will also refer to the government's [contingency framework](#) for further information.

The individual's close contacts at school – where they do not fulfil the criteria outlined in this section of the contingency plan – will be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test. If more individuals test positive, the school will follow advice from the local HPT, which may include requiring more people to self-isolate. Staff who do not need to isolate and young people under the age of 18 years and six months who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal.

The school will use CO<sub>2</sub> monitors to quickly identify and improve any areas with poor ventilation. The monitors will be rotated around the whole school, starting with areas that have the poorest ventilation. The monitors will be used alongside the enhanced ventilation measures the school already has in place, e.g., opening external windows where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

## 6. Face coverings

Pupils, staff and visitors who are not exempt from wearing a face covering will be asked to keep on or put on a face covering at all times when attending the academy. Face masks will be provided.

Pupils and staff may be asked to wear a face covering during activities, unless reasonable social distancing can be maintained, or a face covering would impact on the ability to take part in exercise or strenuous activity.

Advice will be taken from health staff in the hospitals as to whether face coverings need to be worn on the wards whilst teaching.

## 7. Visitors to sites

We will keep any visitors to our settings to a minimum. Any non-essential visits will be cancelled, and meetings moved to online if possible.

## 8. Shielding

Although there is no official shielding list any longer, we will speak to individuals who have complex health conditions about additional protective measures in the academy or arrangements for home working or learning if necessary.

## 9. Other measures

All parents, carers, pupils and staff have been informed promptly about the introduction of control measures, following the government announcement of the move to Plan B on 8.12.21. Additional information following the DfE update on 2.12.21, including the wearing of face masks at all times, will be communicated via email, letters home and information on the academy website.

We will limit:

- › Educational visits
- › Transition days
- › Parents coming into the academy
- › Live performances / other visiting activities
- › Home visits (these can be done outside/standing in gardens)
- › Home teaching

If recommended, we will reintroduce:

- › Reduced cross-base working
- › Reduced mixing between classes/groups
- › Limitations on the movement of classes/groups between rooms
- › Physical distancing measures

## 10. Attendance restrictions

Attendance restrictions will only be recommended as a last resort. If recommended, we will implement the measures in this section.

### 10.1 Eligibility to remain in school

All our pupils will be eligible to remain in school as they are all deemed vulnerable.

### 10.2 Education and support for pupils at home

For pupils who cannot attend and are required to stay at home, a remote education offer will be in place.

We will aim 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.

The academy will continue to provide 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.

### 10.3 Extra-curricular activities

We will limit access to any before and after-school activities during term time.

## 11. Safeguarding

We will review our child protection policy to make sure it reflects the local restrictions and remains effective.

We will aim to have a trained DSL or deputy DSL on site wherever possible. All staff are aware of how to contact DSLs or deputies.

As all of our pupils are considered vulnerable, when any pupils are absent, we will:

- › Speak to parents/carers and, where appropriate, social workers and the local authority, to work out the reason for absence

- Encourage attendance
- Ensure vulnerable pupils can access appropriate education and support while at home
- Maintain contact, and check regularly that the pupil is able to access remote education provision