



Budbrooke Primary School's Covid-19 Operational Plan

November 2021 (update)

This guidance explains the actions required to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in our school. This includes public health advice, endorsed by Public Health England (PHE)

Overview

The government continues to manage the risk of serious illness from the spread of the virus. Step 4 marked a new phase in the government's response to the pandemic, moving away from stringent restrictions on everyone's day-to-day lives, towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, alongside targeted interventions to reduce risk. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to children and young people's education - particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult has been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September.

Our priority is to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils. The evidence is clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health.

Risk assessment

We must comply with health and safety law and put in place proportionate control measures. We regularly review and update our risk assessments - treating them as 'living documents', as the circumstances in our school and the public health advice changes. This includes having active arrangements in place to monitor whether the controls are effective and working as planned.

Mixing and 'bubbles'

It is no longer recommend to keep children in consistent groups ('bubbles'). This means that bubbles will not need to be in schools from the autumn term.

As well as enabling flexibility in curriculum delivery, this means that assemblies can resume, and we no longer need to make alternative arrangements to avoid mixing at lunch.

We will make sure our outbreak management plan cover the possibility that in some local areas it may become necessary to reintroduce 'bubbles' for a temporary period, to reduce mixing between groups.

Any decision to recommend the reintroduction of 'bubbles' would not be taken lightly and would need to take account of the detrimental impact they can have on the delivery of education.

Tracing close contacts and isolation

We will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing.

As with positive cases in any other setting, NHS Test and Trace will work with the positive case and/or their parent to identify close contacts. Contacts from a school setting will only be traced by NHS Test and Trace where the positive case and/or their parent specifically identifies the individual as being a close contact. This is likely to be a small number of individuals who would be most at risk of contracting COVID-19 due to the nature of the close contact. You may be contacted in exceptional cases to help with identifying close contacts, as currently happens in managing other infectious diseases.

Individuals are **not** required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19, and any of the following apply:

- they are fully vaccinated
- they are below the age of 18 years and 6 months
- 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

Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a [PCR test](#). We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

Staff who do not need to isolate, and children and young people aged under 18 years 6 months who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, **should continue to attend school as normal**. They do not need to wear a face covering within the school, but it is expected and recommended that these are worn when travelling on public or dedicated transport.

Settings will continue to have a role in working with health protection teams in the case of a local outbreak. If there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in a setting or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, a director of public health might advise a setting to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

Face coverings

Face coverings should be worn in communal areas in **all** settings by staff, visitors and pupils or students in year 7 and above, unless they are exempt.

Stepping measures up and down

We have contingency plans outlining what we would do if children, pupils, students or staff test positive for COVID-19, or how we would operate if we were advised to take extra measures to help break chains of transmission. Given the detrimental impact that restrictions on education can have on children and young people, any measures in schools should only ever be considered as a last resort, kept to the minimum number of groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.

Central government may offer local areas of particular concern an enhanced response package to help limit increases in transmission.

Control measures

We will:

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone.
2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes.
3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated.
4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19.

1. Ensure good hygiene for everyone

Hand hygiene

Frequent and thorough hand cleaning should now be regular practice. We will continue to ensure that pupils clean their hands regularly. This can be done with soap and water or hand sanitiser.

Respiratory hygiene

The 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach continues to be very important.

The [e-Bug COVID-19 website](#) contains free resources for you, including materials to encourage good hand and respiratory hygiene.

Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

Most staff in schools will not require PPE beyond what they would normally need for their work. The guidance on the [use of PPE in education, childcare and children's social care settings](#) provides more information on the use of PPE for COVID-19.

2. Maintain appropriate cleaning regimes, using standard products such as detergents

We will continue to maintain an appropriate cleaning schedule. This will include regular cleaning of areas and equipment, with a particular focus on frequently touched surfaces.

3. Keep occupied spaces well ventilated

When school is in operation, it is important to ensure it is well ventilated and that a comfortable teaching environment is maintained.

We will identify any poorly ventilated spaces as part of our risk assessment and take steps to improve fresh air flow in these areas, giving particular consideration when holding events where visitors such as parents are on site.

Opening external windows can improve natural ventilation, and in addition, opening internal doors can also assist with creating a throughput of air. If necessary, external opening doors may also be used (if they are not fire doors and where safe to do so).

We will balance the need for increased ventilation while maintaining a comfortable temperature.

4. Follow public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test

Pupils, staff and other adults should follow public health advice on [when to self-isolate and what to do](#).

They should not come into school if they have symptoms, have had a positive test result or other reasons requiring them to stay at home due to the risk of them passing on COVID-19 (for example, they are required to quarantine).

If anyone in our school develops [COVID-19 symptoms](#), however mild, we will send them home and they should follow public health advice.

For everyone with symptoms, they should avoid using public transport and, wherever possible, be collected by a member of their family or household.

The household (including any siblings) should follow the PHE [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#).

From 16 August, you will not be required to self-isolate if you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19 and any of the following apply:

- you are fully vaccinated
- you are below the age of 18 years 6 months
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

Asymptomatic testing

Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools.

Staff should undertake twice weekly home tests whenever they are on site, this will be reviewed throughout the term.

Confirmatory PCR tests

Staff and pupils with a positive LFD test result should self-isolate in line with the [stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection](#). They will also need to [get a free PCR test to check if they have COVID-19](#).

Whilst awaiting the PCR result, the individual should continue to self-isolate.

If the PCR test is taken within 2 days of the positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the self-test LFD test and the pupil can return to school, as long as the individual doesn't have COVID-19 symptoms.

Additional information on [PCR test kits for schools and further education providers](#) is available.

Other considerations

All clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) children and young people should attend their education setting unless they are one of the very small number of children and young people under paediatric or other specialist care who have been advised by their clinician or other specialist not to attend.

Admitting children into school

In most cases, parents and carers will agree that a pupil with symptoms should not attend the school, given the potential risk to others.

If a parent or carer insists on a pupil attending your school, we 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. Our decision would need to be carefully considered in light of all the circumstances and current public health advice.

Attendance

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age and it is a priority to ensure that as many children as possible regularly attend school. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

Where a child is required to self-isolate or quarantine because of COVID-19 in accordance with relevant legislation or guidance the absence will be recorded as code X (not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus).

Where they are unable to attend because they have a confirmed case of COVID-19 they will be recorded as code I (illness).

These codes will not be used to record any other type of non-attendance or absence - for example, where a parent or pupil is anxious about attending school because of COVID-19.

Travel and quarantine

All pupils travelling to England must adhere to [travel legislation](#), details of which are set out in [government travel advice](#).

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.

Remote education

Not all people with COVID-19 have symptoms. Where appropriate, we will support those who need to self-isolate because they have tested positive to work or learn from home if they are well enough to do so.

Education Recovery

We will continue to support pupils to make accelerated progress and there is some additional funding from central government to support school initiatives.

Pupil wellbeing and support

Some pupils may be experiencing a variety of emotions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as anxiety, stress or low mood. We can access useful links and sources of support on [promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools](#).

School meals

We will be returning to a more normal lunchtime service. We will continue to provide free school meals to support any pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals.