

**St. Mary’s RC Primary School**

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contingency Plan

2021-2022

**Revised May, 2022**

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**Please note:** this plan was created in line with the government advice regarding contingency planning as set out in the DfE’s [‘Contingency framework: education and childcare settings’](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings?utm_source=14%20May%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) and ‘[Schools COVID-19 operational guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/guidance-for-full-opening-schools) (Jan 2022)’ documents. The operational guidance also reflects the new measures set out in light of Omicron variant and Plan B (autumn and winter plan 2021). The government has made it a national priority that education and childcare settings should continue to stay open as much as possible during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic to deliver face-to-face, high quality education to all pupils. The evidence being clear that being out of education causes significant harm to educational attainment, life chances, mental and physical health. Any restrictions on education would only be as a last resort and should only be initiated following a ministerial decision on a case-by-case basis. **As advice is changing frequently, please refer to the latest government guidance at -** [**https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus**](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)**. Please also refer to the document ‘COVID19 – Advice for parents in GM - update,’ which is on the policy page of our website.**

# The aim of this plan

If our school or local area sees an extremely high prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) infection rates and existing measures in our community have failed to reduce this, the appropriate authorities will decide which additional measures to implement to help contain the spread. These measures may involve implementing a number of restrictions, which could include the partial closure of schools and childcare settings in our area. Measures may also be necessary to help minimise the impact from new coronavirus variants.

This contingency plan, also known as an ‘outbreak management plan’, outlines how the school will operate if further restrictions are implemented. The school will work closely with the local health protection team (HPT) and implement provisions as advised by the team.

This is a live document that will be reviewed by the Headteacher, in conjunction with other key stakeholders, as and when the situation develops.

# Restrictions to attendance

The government has advised that all schools should continue to operate as normal and that all pupils should attend school unless required to self-isolate.

The contingency framework is designed to act as a containment measure where:

* There is extremely high prevalence of coronavirus.
* Other measures have already been implemented.
* There is a need to minimise the impact from a new coronavirus variant.

Restrictive attendance measures, of the kind set out in the contingency framework, must not be implemented by schools without the explicit agreement of the DfE.

Restricting attendance in any form will only be used as a last resort, initiated following a ministerial decision. Where restrictions to attendance are implemented following government advice, they will be kept to a minimum, allowing for the maximum number of pupils to attend education; however, in all circumstances, priority will be given to vulnerable pupils and the children of critical workers to attend full time.

As part of their outbreak management responsibilities, LAs, Directors of Public Health, and HPTs may advise individual settings or a cluster of closely linked settings to limit attendance in one of the ways described in this section.

Where LAs judge that wider containment action is needed and wish to limit attendance within an area, they will work with their Regional Partnership Team to escalate a proposal to the central Local Action Committee command structure.

If the contingency framework is implemented, the school will only allow the following pupils to attend on-site provision:

* Vulnerable pupils
* Children of critical workers
* Pupils in Year 6, who were due to take external exams this academic year, where advised by the DfE

High-quality remote education will be provided for all pupils not in attendance, in line with the Pupil Remote Learning Policy.

The school will lift restrictions as soon as it is advised by the government that it is appropriate to do so.

**As advice is changing frequently, please refer to the latest government guidance at -** [**https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus**](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)**. Please also refer to the document ‘COVID19 – Advice for parents in GM - update,’ which is on the policy page of our website.**

# Infection prevention and control

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. Critical workers, including school staff, have priority access to testing.

The school will encourage staff to increase their use of home testing if advised accordingly by the relevant authorities, e.g. Directors of Public Health.

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. 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. If PCR is returned positive, the pupil will be required to self-isolate for at least 10 days – remote education will be arranged for them following the Remote Learning policy.

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. 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.

From 14 December 2021, adults who are fully vaccinated and all children and young people aged between 5 and 18 years and 6 months identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are strongly advised to take a LFD test every day for 7 days and continue to attend their setting as normal, unless they have a positive test result. Daily testing of close contacts applies to all contacts who are:

• fully vaccinated adults – people who have had 2 doses of an approved vaccine

• all children and young people aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, regardless of their vaccination status

• people who are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons

• people taking part, or have taken part, in an approved clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine

Children under 5 years are exempt from self-isolation and do not need to take part in daily testing of close contacts.

Adults who received their second dose of the vaccine close to 16 August will need to continue to follow the same rules as unvaccinated adults until two weeks after their second dose. 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.

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 thresholds will be used as an indication of when to seek public health advice, whichever is reached first:

* Five children, pupils, students or staff who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for coronavirus within a 10-day period
* 10 percent of children, pupils, students or 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, focussing on touch points and any shared equipment.

A director of public health 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.

The school will liaise with schools@covid to seek additional advice if there is concern regarding transmission in the school and by phoning the DfE helpline on 0800 046 8687. The school will also refer to the government’s [contingency framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-in-education-and-childcare-settings) 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 pupils who have been identified as a close contact should continue to attend school as normal.

In the result of an outbreak during step 4 of the coronavirus recovery roadmap, a temporary requirement could be implemented for face coverings to be worn for both pupils and staff (however, the school would have a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010, which includes making adjustments for disabled staff, and also pupils in order to support them to access education successfully). Please refer to pages 8-10 of Operational Guidance for full information pertaining to facial coverings. The school may also be required to reintroduce the use of bubbles in order to resume social distancing and limit the transmission of coronavirus. The school will adhere to any conditions set out by the local HPT.

**As advice is changing frequently, please refer to the latest government guidance at -** [**https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus**](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)**. Please also refer to the document ‘COVID19 – Advice for parents in GM - update,’ which is on the policy page of our website.**

# Teaching and learning

If restrictions to on-site education are required, the school will offer immediate access to high quality remote education for all pupils who are required to remain at home. All remote learning will be delivered in line with the school’s Remote Learning Policy

Where advised during a local outbreak, further restrictions may be enforced with regards to certain musical and drama activities, e.g. singing, for pupils attending on-site provision, to help reduce the risk of transmitting coronavirus. Restrictions may also be reintroduced to contact and indoor sports. The school will follow the advice provided by the local HPT.

Teachers will ensure lessons are suitable to the class group’s age and ability, inclusive for all pupils, and will be adapted, where necessary, to account for the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

When teaching pupils who are working remotely, please consult Remote Learning Policy. In brief, teachers will:

* Set work so that pupils have meaningful and ambitious work each day.
* Deliver a planned, coherent and well-sequenced curriculum which allows skills to be built incrementally.
* Provide frequent, clear explanations of new content through high-quality curriculum resources, including through educational videos.
* Assess progress by using questions and other suitable tasks and use assessment to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils’ needs and addresses any critical gaps in pupils’ knowledge.
* Adjust the pace or difficulty of what is being taught in response to questions or assessments, including, where necessary, revising material or simplifying explanations to ensure pupils’ understanding.
* Provide opportunities for interactivity, e.g. questioning and reflective discussion.
* Provide scaffolded practice and opportunities to apply new knowledge.
* Enable pupils to receive timely and frequent feedback on how to progress, using digitally-facilitated or whole-class feedback where appropriate.
* Plan a programme that is of equivalent length to the core teaching pupils would receive in school.

In exceptional circumstances, the school may reduce its curriculum offering to enable pupils to cope with the workload – the Headteacher will assess this need, keeping pupils’ best interests in mind, and will not take the decision lightly.

Teachers will continue to make use of formative assessments throughout the academic year, e.g. quizzes.

The school will utilise the support available through the DfE’s [‘Get help with technology during coronavirus (COVID-19)’](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19) scheme. Under the scheme, the school can order laptops, tablets and 4G wireless routers to support groups of pupils if they do not have access to a digital device or the internet through other means.

Before distributing devices, the school will ensure:

* The devices are set up to access remote education.
* Appropriate safeguarding controls and support are in place to help pupils and their families use the devices safely.
* Parents/carers/children follow the arrangements in the loan agreement.

Once devices are ready for collection, the school will either arrange for them to be collected by families from school or delivered to pupils’ homes, ensuring infection control measures are adhered to as part of this process.

# Returning to school

The Headteacher will work with the LA to ensure pupils only return to school when it is safe for them to do so. Prior to the return of more pupils and staff, all relevant risk assessments will be reviewed.

The Headteacher will inform staff, pupils and parents, prior to the return to school, whether any further restrictions, such as the use of bubbles, have been resumed.

After a period of self-isolation, or the relaxation of restrictions, the Headteacher will inform parents when their child will return to school.

The school will listen to all concerns that parents may have about their child returning to school and will advise them of the measures in place to ensure the safety of their child.

# Exams and assessments

The school will remain open for any exams planned in line with current government guidance.

Wherever necessary, the school will implement additional mitigations to ensure the safe delivery of exams, which may include:

* Two-metre spacing between all desks, where directed.
* Additional controls for candidates who are classed as clinically extremely vulnerable. This may include measures such as seating them in a separate room to other candidates

# Safeguarding

Ensuring safeguarding arrangements remain effective during periods of restricted attendance is a key priority. Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy has an addendum to include provisions for keeping pupils safe during the coronavirus pandemic, both at home and in school – we will continue to follow these procedures for pupils who remain at home, where appropriate, until all pupils are able to return to school.

We will continue to ensure that:

* The best interests of pupils always come first.
* If anyone in the school has a safeguarding concern about a pupil, they act immediately.
* A DSL or deputy DSL is always available.
* Unsuitable individuals are not permitted to work with pupils or come into contact with pupils whilst on site.
* Pupils who remain at home are protected when they are online.

We aim to have a trained DSL, deputy (DDSL) or Children’s Welfare Officer (CWO) on-site wherever possible. If these can’t be in school, they can be contacted remotely via phone. Our DSL/DDSL/CWO will continue to engage with social workers, and attend multi-agency meetings, which may take place remotely.

If there are occasions where there is no DSL, DDSL or CWO on site, a member of the senior leadership team will take responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding. These are Mrs Braisdell, Miss Dovey and Mrs Bonnar.

The senior leader will be responsible for liaising with the off-site DSL/DDSL/CWO to make sure they (the senior leader) can:

* Identify the most vulnerable children in school and deal with any concerns and disclosures
* Update and manage access to child protection files, where necessary
* Liaise with children’s social workers where they need access to children in need and/or to carry out statutory assessments

In the event that we do not have DSL/DDSL cover available due to staffing shortages, school will notify Gillian Barratt, Head of Schools and Claire Heap, Education Safeguarding Officer, so that arrangements can be considered for sharing resource with another school.

We will keep all school staff and volunteers informed if there is any change to the DSL/DDSL/CWO on any given day, and how to contact them.

# Food provision

We will provide meal options for all pupils who are attending school.

We will provide FSM or food parcels to eligible pupils who are not attending school, where they:

* Are self-isolating.
* Have had symptoms or have tested positive.
* Are not attending due to the implementation of local restrictions advised by the government.

The school catering team will work with our food providers to prepare meals or food parcels, for collection or delivery, to eligible children during their time at home.

# Communication

The school will communicate its plan for addressing any imposed restrictions with parents, including in relation to:

* Opening arrangements.
* Access for specific targeted groups where applicable, such as certain year groups, vulnerable pupils and children of critical workers.
* Any reviews of the school’s protective measures as part of our risk assessments.
* The arrangements for remote working.

All relevant stakeholders will be kept up-to-date with the circumstances of any imposed restrictions and how these affect the school as the situation develops.

If any member of the school community wishes to discuss any concerns relating to the school’s provision during this period, they should contact the following as appropriate:

* Staff – their line manager
* Pupils – their class teacher or member of pastoral staff
* Parents – the senior leadership team

# Monitoring and review

This plan will be reviewed continually, by the Headteacher, in line with guidance from the government and Public Health England (PHE).

Any changes to the plan will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders as soon as possible.