

COVID 19 Control Measures Review

October 2021 – All Schools

Dear all,

Over the last couple of days we have been receiving communications from local authorities' Public Health Directors, outlining their emerging recommendations regarding COVID 19 control measures for the next couple of weeks.

All the local authority areas within which we work are recommending taking similar precautions with only minor variations, so we feel it is best as a Trust to adopt one common approach. We will monitor this approach and make any further changes required by local public health teams, should transmission rates continue to rise.

Our baseline position as a Trust is that we follow the **National DfE Guidance** on the risk management of COVID. However, where **local public health advice** differs from national guidance, we encourage school leaders to engage with these changes, and, where appropriate to your settings, put the guidance into practice. If you are unsure about how to respond to these changes, please discuss with your Regional Director, or with Steven Harrison, our Trust Health and Safety Manager.

PLEASE NOTE: the safety of staff and students is paramount, and we strongly recommend that schools adopt the additional measures outlined below.

You may have already implemented some of the measures included in the Additional Control Measures list below; if you have, please continue to do so and monitor their effectiveness.

For ease of reading, I have separated the lists in the appendices, attached, those measures which we should already have in place, and measures which are additional recommendations.

These additional measures should remain in place until further information from the Trust is provided, or until further guidance is obtained from local public health teams. The Trust will continue to support all schools in the implementation of these measures and will provide guidance where it is required.

Schools should continue to seek advice from local public health teams, if they identify 5 or more positive cases which are deemed as close contact, or they identify that the number of positive cases is 10% or more of their total student population.

If you have any queries relating to the content of this communication please speak to either your Regional Director or the Health and Safety Manager and we will be happy to assist.

Kind Regards

Steven Harrison

Health and Safety Manager

Astrea Academy Trust

APPENDIX 1: A REMINDER: All Settings – Measures which should already be in place

- Persons including staff/students who are symptomatic are not to attend school, and are to ensure they obtain a PCR test for confirmation
- We advise that lateral flow tests continue to be conducted twice weekly by all members of staff, with positive results reported to the school
- If a member of staff is identified as a close contact through NHS test and trace, they should seek a PCR test and forward the results to the school. If the member of staff is fully vaccinated, they are permitted to continue attendance in school until the result is known.

Staff who are not fully vaccinated, are to self-isolate until the result of the PCR test becomes available and is communicated with the school.

- If a student/pupil is identified as a close contact through NHS test and Trace, they should seek a PCR test. Students/Pupils are permitted to continue to attend school until the result is known
- Regular cleaning of touch points and common areas within schools should continue to be carried out
- Regular checks of teaching rooms and occupied spaces should be taking place, to ensure that we are doing all we can to provide sufficient natural sources of ventilation
- Signage should already be in place to be used as a reminder for regular cleaning of hands, and to show the correct hand washing technique or the use of hand sanitiser
- Adequate supplies of hand sanitiser and cleaning materials should be held within the school, and provided to staff who require it

APPENDIX 2: RECOMMENDED NEW CONTROL MEASURES: All Settings

It is recommended that:

- All staff should conduct a LFT the night prior to the start of term, and should report positive results. If the result is positive, the member of staff should seek confirmation of their result via a PCR test. Staff should not attend school until the PCR test result has been received
- All secondary school students should undertake a LFT the night prior to the start of term. If the result is positive, they should not attend school and should seek a PCR test for confirmation of the result – **secondary settings only**

- In the event we have more than 1 positive case (confirmed PCR) in a group/class/form, a warn and inform letter should be sent to parents of those students identified as close contacts. This letter should recommend that a PCR test is undertaken for their child – Pupils can continue attendance whilst they await the test result, providing they do not develop symptoms
- Further to the above, any members of staff who have been identified as a close contact should also seek a PCR test. Members of staff are permitted to continue attendance at school whilst they await the result of the test, unless they develop symptoms

If the school becomes aware that a member of a pupil's household has tested positive for COVID 19, the pupil should remain at home to self-isolate. If the child develops symptoms on day 1 or 2 then a PCR test should be undertaken immediately, if no symptoms are present then a PCR test should be undertaken between 3 – 5 days after the member of their household developed symptoms – if the test result is negative the child can return to school.

- All staff should now wear face coverings in communal areas, this includes transit around school and in staff rooms or when using school/public transport methods – **this also applies to all students in secondary settings.**
- Parents are advised to wear face coverings when collecting or dropping off their child or when moving around a school site
- All non-essential visits to the school are postponed or alternative methods of communication are used. Visits which are arranged and are involved with the Health, Safety or Wellbeing of staff/pupils, along with visits from Regional Directors, Curriculum Leaders and Central Team members whose presence is critical to the school's improvement journey, are permitted, providing that the visitor wears a face covering at all times and they are not displaying symptoms of COVID 19.
- All staff meetings within the school should be conducted using online methods wherever possible to prevent unnecessary face to face contact between persons.
- All assemblies should be conducted using online methods such as Microsoft teams to prevent unnecessary contact between persons
- Risk assessments for those previously deemed as CEV or pregnant members of staff should be reviewed at the start of term. Additional controls could include the use of face coverings at all times during the day and a recommendation to socially distance where possible
- It is recommended that a one-off deep clean is conducted prior to the start of term