



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLAN - SEPTEMBER 2021



The Government has made it a national priority that education and childcare settings should continue to operate as normally as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 becomes a virus that we learn to live with, there is now an imperative to reduce the disruption to our children's education, particularly given that the direct clinical risks to children are extremely low, and every adult will have been offered a first vaccine and the opportunity for 2 doses by mid-September.

The priority is for schools 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 health and physical health.

This contingency plan has been created to work alongside the school's existing COVID-19 Risk Assessment and sets out what the school would do if children or staff test positive for COVID-19, or how the school would operate if we were advised to reintroduce any additional measures deemed necessary to break chains of transmission.



Changes in Guidelines for the September 2021

Mixing and Bubbles

It is no longer necessary for the children to be kept in consistent groups or bubbles. As a result of this:

- Our children attending ABC will be able to play together once more
- Our children will be able to mix with others on the playground and will no longer be restricted to class bubbles playing in separate areas to other class bubbles
- Our children will be able to eat together in the dining hall once more and will no longer eat in classrooms
- Staff will be able to move freely between classes
- Resources can be shared between classes without a need to 'quarantine' them or deep clean them
- Assemblies will restart in September
- Extra-curricular clubs can once again be offered to mixed year groups
- Staggered starts and ends to the school day will finish
- Our office staff will return to sharing an office

IF INFECTION RATES CONTINUE TO RISE AND LOCAL/NATIONAL RESTRICTIONS CHANGE THEN IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO REINTRODUCE BUBBLES FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD IN ORDER TO REDUCE MIXING AND CONTACT BETWEEN GROUPS. IF THIS WAS TO HAPPEN, SCHOOL WOULD REINTRODUCE/REVERT BACK TO THE SYSTEMS THAT WERE IN PLACE THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2020 - 2021 (AS OUTLINED IN PREVIOUS RISK ASSESSMENT 2020/2021)

Forward Facing Seating

Children will no longer be required to sit in forward facing rows. Desks can be put together to form table groups and these groups can be fluid throughout the day.

FORWARD FACING SEATING AND SITTING IN ROWS MAY NEED TO BE REINTRODUCED IN RESPONSE TO INCREASING INFECTION RATES OR TO CHANGES IN LOCAL/NATIONAL GUIDELINES

Contact Tracing and Isolation

School will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing. Individuals will not be 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 Test and Trace and advised to take a PCR test.

Staff (who do not need to isolate) and all children, who usually attend school, and have been identified as a close contact, should continue to attend school as normal.

IF THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN POSITIVE CASES IN A SETTING OR LOCAL AREA, OR IF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OFFERS THE AREA AN ENHANCED RESPONSE PACKAGE, A DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC

HEALTH MAY ADVISE SCHOOL TO TEMPORARILY REINTRODUCE SOME ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES.

Face Coverings

Face coverings no longer need to be worn by staff and visitors in classrooms or in communal areas.

GOVERNMENT RECOMMENDS THAT FACE COVERINGS ARE WORN BY STAFF/VISITORS IN ENCLOSED AND CROWDED SPACES WHERE STAFF MAY COME INTO CONTACT WITH PEOPLE THEY DON'T NORMALLY MEET.

IF THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF POSITIVE CASES IN SCHOOL, A DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH MAY ADVISE THAT FACE COVERINGS ARE WORN TEMPORARILY IN COMMUNAL AREAS OR CLASSROOMS. FACE VISORS ARE NOT AN EQUIVALENT ALTERNATIVE IN TERMS OF SOURCE CONTROL OF VIRUS TRANSMISSION.

STAFF IN ABC WILL BE ASKED TO WEAR FACE COVERINGS ONCE AGAIN.

Control Measures in Place for September 2021

- We will continue to ensure that good hygiene is in place for everyone. Handwashing will continue to play an important role in the children's daily life - whilst at school. E.g. washing hands upon entry, before eating etc
- We will continue to teach the children to use the 'Catch It, Bin It, Kill It' approach
- Classrooms and shared spaces will continue to be kept well ventilated - windows will be open whenever and wherever possible as well as internal classroom doors. External classroom doors will be kept open during break and lunchtimes. Children are able to wear fleeces, over their school jumpers/cardigans when the weather gets colder in order to ensure that they are warm enough.
- When holding school events where visitors such as parents are on site, numbers will initially be restricted, seats will be arranged further apart than usual, and windows/doors will be kept open.
- Cleaning stations will continue to be available in all classrooms to enable regular cleaning of equipment. The focus of cleaning will continue to be on frequently touched surfaces.
- When an individual develops COVID-19 symptoms or has a positive test - pupils and staff should continue to 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 if they are quarantining.
- If anyone develops symptoms whilst in school, however mild, they will be sent home and reminded to follow public health advice. Anyone awaiting collection, will be left in the Meeting Room, on their own if possible and safe to do so, and a window will be opened to ensure that the room is well ventilated. The room will be cleaned once it has been vacated. Household members should follow PHE stay at home guidance for households with possible or confirmed cases.
- Staff will be encouraged to take twice weekly home tests until the end of September, when this will be reviewed - as per Government guidelines

- Children/staff showing COVID-19 symptoms should not attend school.
- Any member of staff or child who receives a positive lateral flow test must isolate and get a PCR test to confirm the result. They must self-isolate and not come into school until the PCR result is known.
- If a PCR test is taken within 2 days of a positive lateral flow test, and is negative, it overrides the lateral flow test and the member of staff/child can return to school - AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT HAVE ANY COVID-19 SYMPTOMS.
- Children who are unable to attend school due to having tested positive - and are well enough to learn - will be able to access home learning during their quarantine period. Children who are unwell will not be expected to complete home learning tasks until well enough to do so.
- All visitors to site will be asked to provide contact details and the school's COVID safety measures/procedures will be explained to them.
- Educational visits will not be undertaken in the first half-term in order to enable school to monitor infection rates and to assess potential risks.

School will consider extra action when

The Government Contingency Framework for Education and Childcare settings recommends that school should seek public health advice and support if the following threshold is reached:

- 5 children or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10 day-period
- Or
- 10% of children or staff, who are likely to have mixed closely, test positive for COVID-19 within a 10-day period

When either of these thresholds are reached, school will review and reinforce the measures already in place and also seek additional public health advice and support from the Local Authority.

Additional measures may include

Testing

- Increased lateral flow testing for staff from twice a week to daily if necessary
- Asking parents to be extra cautious when sending their children into school - if they are displaying any symptoms no matter how slight, they will be asked to keep their children at home. Lateral flow tests will also be encouraged following a positive case within a class

Face Coverings

- Staff will be asked to wear face masks in communal areas like the main entrance way/photocopying room/staff room.
- ABC staff will be asked to wear face coverings during Breakfast and After School Club

Shielding

- Shielding for the CEV staff will only be reintroduced at school if recommended by the Government.
- CEV staff have their own personal risk assessments and these will be reintroduced if numbers of infections in the school community continue to rise. These risk assessments will reduce the movement of CEV around the school community in order to reduce their number of contacts.

Restrictions on Visitors/Events in School

- School events will be reviewed and cancelled if needed. Performances will be recorded and uploaded onto website
- Parents will not be able to enter the school buildings (as in 2020/21)
- Parents' Evenings will take place over the telephone or via TEAMS
- School trips may need to be cancelled if infection rates in classes are rising
- Whole school gatherings e.g. assemblies will be temporarily suspended - events/lessons may take place outdoors

Further Restrictions

- Extra-curricular clubs will revert back to single class clubs
- Home Reading Books will be quarantined before being sent back out again - as in 2020/21
- Children will not be allowed to bring items to and from school - as in 2020/21
- Resources will be quarantined and rotated - as in 2020/21
- Bubbles may need to be temporarily reintroduced
- ABC children will be grouped into KS1 and KS2. Resources will not be shared between the 2 groups until they have been thoroughly cleaned.
- Lunchtimes may need to be staggered and children may need to eat in classrooms, once again
- Break times may need to be staggered to enable classes to play apart from others
- Staff may be restricted in their movements around school in order to minimise contacts

Attendance and Remote Learning

ATTENDANCE WILL ONLY BE RESTRICTED AS A SHORT-TERM MEASURE AND AS A LAST RESORT AND ONLY ON THE ADVICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH WHERE OTHER RECOMMENDED MEASURES HAVE NOT BROKEN CHAINS OF IN-SETTING TRANSMISSION.

IF ATTENDANCE IS RESTRICTED, PRIORITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN TO VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE CHILDREN OF CRITICAL WORKERS.

REMOTE LEARNING WILL BE OFFERED FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL AS A RESULT OF COVID-19.

SCHOOL WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE FREE SCHOOL MEALS SUPPORT, IN THE FORM OF MEALS OR LUNCH PARCELS, FOR ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS RELATED FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND WHO ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL DUE TO COVID-19

School will inform parents of increasing infection rates/any new restrictions by...

Effective communication between home and school will remain a school priority during the next academic year. It is extremely important that parents are kept fully up to date with all new guidance/restrictions and that they fully understand how these will impact upon their children's education and well-being. Many parents praised school's communication systems during the academic year 2020/21 and were extremely appreciative of the detailed and informative letters/emails that they received.

As in 2020/21 all communication/news will be shared with parents via:

- Texts or via telephone calls for short, urgent messages
- Emails for longer messages - either to the whole school or as a class email
- Detailed letters or information sheets uploaded onto the website, for information that requires further and more in-depth explanations. A text will be sent to parents to inform them that a new letter/sheet has been uploaded.
- The weekly newsletter - any new local COVID-19 news and restrictions will be shared via the newsletter or any general school COVID-19 news

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that school has up-to-date contact numbers and the correct email addresses of all family members in order to guarantee that important news is shared/received as quickly as possible. Parents also need to read the weekly newsletter and other letters/information sheets that are uploaded onto the website.