



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## COVID-19 CONTINGENCY PLAN - UPDATED DEC 2021(1) 20<sup>th</sup> DEC 2021 (2) 7<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022 (3) 17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY (4)

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 has been offered 2 vaccine doses and a further booster dose (by Jan 2022).

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.

# Changes in Guidelines December 2021

School experienced a surge in positive COVID cases at the beginning of December 2021. School responded swiftly once informed of two positive cases and the following additional measures have been put in place until further notice:

- All classes have returned to 'bubbles'. Y1/2 make up an extended bubble whilst they share toilet facilities as do Y4/5. All other classes have own toilet facilities.
- Lessons on good hygiene will be revisited with the children.
- Rec, Y3 and Y6 will eat lunch in their own classrooms. Y1/2 will eat in the dining room but on separate tables - as will Y4/5.
- Parents, unless exempt, must wear masks when dropping off and collecting children. Only Reception parents will be allowed on site in the morning and only 1 adult per child will be allowed on site when collecting children.
- ABC Club have returned to bubbles that reflect the school bubbles.
- Sports Clubs will return to bubbles that reflect the school bubbles.
- Staff will wear masks in shared spaces and if teaching in different classrooms.
- Staff and children will be reminded to keep a 2m distance if possible. If unable to keep a 2m distance, masks will be worn by staff.
- Time slots will be allocated to staff at lunchtimes to enable them to eat lunch whilst maintaining a 2m distance.
- Staff meetings will not go ahead unless held in the hall when a 2m distance can be maintained. Doors will also be opened and masks worn if staff feel more comfortable.
- Breaks and lunchtimes will be staggered.
- Whole school assemblies/gatherings have been cancelled.

- Windows and doors will be opened to allow good air ventilation and air quality monitors will be placed in all classrooms and readings checked regularly. If readings reach the red levels, the children will be taken outside for a short break.
- Music lessons will be replaced by French in KS2 and more paper-based lessons in KS1. Singing will be temporarily stopped - as will the school choir.
- All non-essential visitors into school will be cancelled until infection rates fall.
- All trips out of school will be cancelled until infection rates fall.
- Staff will take regular lateral flow tests and if teaching in a class with a + case, will take a PCR.
- Parents have been asked to lateral flow test the children at least twice a week and if symptomatic book a PCR
- School will send home any children who are symptomatic - including sore throats, upset stomachs
- School will communicate regularly with parents - keeping them fully updated regarding number of + cases and explaining/outlining all new additional measures
- Siblings of + cases will still be permitted to attend school but will need to take a PCR test immediately following the + result and remain at home until the result of the PCR is known. They will then need to take lateral flow tests for 7 days and a PCR test again 5 days after the first test.
- If numbers continue to rise, siblings will be asked to isolate alongside their brother/sister.
- PCR tests will be sent home to any year groups who are experiencing the greatest surges - in line with test and trace advice.
- School has been deep cleaned and all touch points will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.

**IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW OMICRON VARIANT OF COVID-19, ALL INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS A CLOSE CONTACT OF A SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED CASE, IRRESPECTIVE OF VACCINATION STATUS AND AGE, WILL BE CONTACTED DIRECTLY BY TEST AND TRACE AND REQUIRED TO SELF ISOLATE IMMEDIATELY AND ASKED TO BOOK A PCR TEST. SCHOOL WILL KEEP IN REGULAR**

CONTACT WITH ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE ISOLATING VIA PHONE CALLS. HOME LEARNING WILL BE SET FOR THOSE CHILDREN ISOLATING AND COMPLETION OF TASKS WILL BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT SCHOOL IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH HOME LEARNING. HOME VISITS WILL BE CARRIED OUT IF SCHOOL IS CONCERNED ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.

## Changes in Guidelines December 20<sup>th</sup> 2021

THESE GUIDELINES REPLACE THE OMNICRON GUIDELINES ABOVE. ANYONE IDENTIFIED AS BEING A CLOSE CONTACT OF A + CASE - WHETHER OMICRON OR NOT - ARE NOW ASKED TO LFT FOR 7 CONSECUTIVE DAYS RATHER THAN ISOLATING. WHILST SCHOOL IS UNDER OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT, WE WILL ALSO ASK THAT THE CHILDREN TAKE A PCR TEST TOO. SCHOOL WILL KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE ISOLATING VIA PHONE CALLS. HOME LEARNING WILL BE SET FOR THOSE CHILDREN ISOLATING AND COMPLETION OF TASKS WILL BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT SCHOOL IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH HOME LEARNING. HOME VISITS WILL BE CARRIED OUT IF SCHOOL IS CONCERNED ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.

## Returning to School January 2022

For the first two weeks in January, our children and staff will continue to operate under the guidelines/restrictions outlined in red above, as these guidelines were introduced in response to an outbreak of

COVID 19 infections in December 2021 when 20% of the school community tested positive. This will be reviewed wk beginning 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

In addition to the guidelines above, the following further guidelines will be implemented:

- Ask that younger children should be collected before the Junior children and that they are not be allowed to run about whilst waiting to collect their siblings.
- Have classes that may be taught by a different member of staff if infection rates amongst staff rise - some staff who test + but who remain well, may teach the class via TEAMS - a teaching assistant will be present in the classroom to support the children in their learning.
- Ask children aged 5 and over who have been in close contact with a positive case, to take a daily LFT for 7 consecutive days in order to keep attending school. All test results should be reported through the online reporting system and to school.

### **CHANGES IN TESTING/ISOLATION GUIDELINES FROM TUESDAY JANUARY 11<sup>th</sup> 2022**

- Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or anyone who has had a positive lateral flow test, taken as a result of having symptoms, should stay at home and self-isolate immediately. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should arrange to take a PCR test as soon as possible—even if you have had one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- If you are asymptomatic and have had a positive lateral flow as a result of routine testing, from 11th Jan 22, you no longer need to take a confirmatory PCR test. Instead, you should isolate immediately and register your positive result.
- When counting isolation days, you need to count from the day your symptoms started or the date of the positive

lateral flow or PCR test and the next 10 full days.

- You may be able to end your isolation period before the end of the 10 full days if you have a negative lateral flow test on day 6 and day 7 of your isolation period. The day 7 LFT should be taken at least 24 hours later. If both tests are negative and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your isolation after the second negative result.
- All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 - whether Omicron or not - should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating.
- In order for your child to attend school, after being identified as a close contact, your child must take a lateral flow test before attending school each day—for the 7 days after contact with the positive case. **Can we please ask that these tests are done in the morning before school rather than the night before, as readings are changing very quickly and what may be a negative result in the evening, could turn out to be a positive result the next morning.**
- All Lateral Flow Test results should be reported through the online reporting system. **School should also be informed of the result before your child attends school that day**

If your child does test positive—please email school as soon as possible. Emails are monitored regularly during evenings and weekends.

- If school has been notified of a positive case in your child's class, school will text/email you to make you aware as soon as we are able to. We will also include advice regarding what you can do as parents. If you don't hear from us - there are no cases, or no new cases, in your child's class.



SCHOOL WILL KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE ISOLATING VIA PHONE CALLS. HOME LEARNING WILL BE SET FOR THOSE CHILDREN ISOLATING AND COMPLETION OF TASKS WILL BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT SCHOOL IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH HOME LEARNING. HOME VISITS WILL BE CARRIED OUT IF SCHOOL IS CONCERNED ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.

## Further Changes in Guidelines January 17<sup>th</sup> 2022

The advice for people who have had a positive lateral flow test has changed—regardless of whether you are symptomatic or not.

If you or your child have a positive lateral flow test, then you are no longer required to have a follow up PCR test to confirm the result. Instead, you or your child should stay at home and self-isolate immediately.

### A POSITIVE LATERAL FLOW = ISOLATION

- When counting isolation days, you need to count from the day your symptoms started or from the date of the positive lateral flow or PCR test and the next 10 full days.
- You may be able to end your isolation period after 5 full days from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022. If you have 2 negative lateral flow tests, you can leave isolation at the start of day 6. IF YOU HAVE A TEMPERATURE, ISOLATION NEEDS TO CONTINUE
- If you or your child have a NEGATIVE lateral flow test, but YOU HAVE ANY OF THE MAIN SYMPTOMS of COVID-19 then you MUST arrange to have a PCR test. Children will not be able to attend school without the results of a PCR test—even if their lateral flow is negative - IF they are symptomatic.

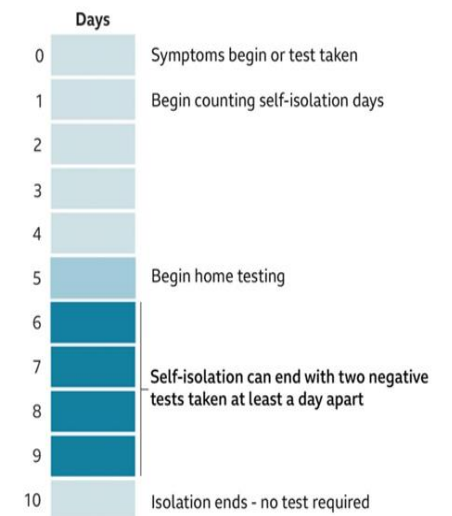


School should be informed of a + lateral flow or PCR test as soon as possible - even over the weekend - as school's emails are monitored over the weekend. If school has been notified of a positive case in your child's class, school will text/email you to make you aware as soon as we are able to. We will also include advice regarding what you can do as parents. If you don't hear from us - there are no cases, or no new cases, in your child's class. Numbers of positive cases will be updated every Friday, via the newsletter. School will also share any further advice that we have had from the LA, public health and test and trace.

- All adults who are fully vaccinated and children aged 5 to 18 years and 6 months, identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 - whether Omicron or not - should take a lateral flow device (LFD) test every day for 7 days instead of self-isolating.
- In order for your child to attend school, after being identified as a close contact, your child **must** take a lateral flow test before attending school each day—for the 7 days after contact with the positive case. **Can we please ask that these tests are done in the morning before school rather than the night before, as readings are changing very quickly and what may be a negative result in the evening, could turn out to be a positive result the next morning.**

All Lateral Flow Test results should be reported through the online reporting system. **School should also be informed of the result before your child attends school that day.**

How five-day isolation rule works in England



SCHOOL WILL KEEP IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE ISOLATING VIA PHONE CALLS. HOME LEARNING WILL BE SET FOR THOSE CHILDREN ISOLATING AND COMPLETION OF TASKS WILL BE MONITORED BY THE CLASS TEACHER. FAMILIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT SCHOOL IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING ANY DIFFICULTIES WITH HOME LEARNING. HOME VISITS WILL BE CARRIED OUT IF SCHOOL IS CONCERNED ABOUT INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.