



OUR LADY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT PLAN (Autumn 2021-22)

This outbreak management plan is written based on the guidance provided by the government in the latest version of the [contingency framework](#) in addition to Herts County Council Guidance. It will be reviewed as any guidance is updated.

Principles

- Our overarching objective is to maximise the number of children and young people in face-to face education or childcare and minimise any disruption, in a way that best manages the COVID-19 risk.
- The impacts of having missed face-to-face education during the pandemic are severe for children, young people and adults. In all cases, any benefits in managing transmission will be weighed against any educational drawbacks.
- We will endeavour to keep any measures in education and childcare to the minimum number of settings or groups possible, and for the shortest amount of time possible.
- We will keep all measures under regular review and lift them as soon as the evidence supports doing so.
- Attendance restrictions will only ever be considered as a last resort.

Stage 1 – Ongoing risk assessment & control measures

Our COVID risk assessment can be found on our website and describes the ongoing control measures we have in place to reduce risks related to COVID, including:

- Individual risk factors meaning staff / pupils more vulnerable to COVID-19;
- School occupants coming into contact with those with COVID-19 symptoms;
- General transmission of COVID-19;
- Ineffective hygiene protocols;
- Ineffective cleaning;
- MI minimising contact and maintenance of social distancing;
- Access to and egress from site;
- Contact points and equipment use;
- Proximity of pupils and staff;
- Shared areas use / lunchtimes;
- Transport / travel off site;
- Contractors;
- Provision of first aid;
- Provision of personal care;
- Emergency procedures (fire alarm activations etc);
- Deliveries and waste collection;
- Premises safety;
- Lack of awareness of control measures;
- Staffing levels.

This risk assessment has been reviewed in the light of the latest move to Step 4 in the Government's roadmap to lifting restrictions related to the pandemic. We will continue to review this based on ongoing advice from the Local Health Protection (LPH) team and Department for Education (DfE) and according to local circumstances.

Stage 2 – Identification of outbreak

We have considered the need to take extra action if the number of positive cases substantially increases – this could indicate that an outbreak is happening.

An outbreak (as identified by Government guidance) is likely to be identified whenever one of these thresholds is reached first:

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

Identifying a group that is likely to have mixed closely will be different for each setting. Below are some examples.

For Nursery and Reception, this could include:

- A childminder minding children, including their own;
- Childminders working together on the same site;
- A nursery class;
- A friendship group who often play together;
- Staff and children taking part in the same activity session together.

For Years 1 to 6, this could include:

- A class group;
- A friendship group mixing at breaktimes;
- A sports team;
- A group in an after-school activity.

If we believe we have met either of these thresholds, we will also seek advice from the Local Public HealthTeam (LPF) and/or DfE about extra action that should be taken to manage the outbreak.

In the event of an outbreak the school's COVID-19 risk assessment will be reviewed and updated. There may be a need to introduce additional measures to mitigate the risk of transmission, examples of the things that we may consider are detailed below and should be introduced as appropriate based on the circumstances of the outbreak.

Potential additional outbreak control measures
<u>Face Coverings:</u> Temporary re-introduction of face coverings for the whole school or the class(es) / year(s) affected. Those wearing face coverings should clean hands before and after touching – including to remove or put them on – and store them in individual, sealable plastic bags between use. Re-introduction of face coverings would apply for visitors and staff in corridors and communal areas, including staffrooms (where close contact cannot be avoided) and at drop off and collection for parents and for staff in classrooms if close contact cannot be maintained.
<u>Enhanced cleaning:</u> School's cleaning schedule reviewed and enhanced during the duration of the outbreak – particularly for rooms used by multiple groups / classes.
<u>Limit the use of some shared areas</u> for example <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designated toilets for year groups;• Limitations in the use of the Library or computing suite.
Resources that are shared between different groups/classes such as playground, sports, art, and science equipment, should be cleaned frequently and between use by different classes / groups.

Potential additional outbreak control measures

Limiting activities:

Planned events / activities (e.g. open days, transition, or taster days) reviewed and specific risk assessments conducted to determine if these can proceed in line with an agreed system of additional controls (limitation on numbers attending, wearing of face coverings, one way systems, enhanced cleaning regime etc.) or should be postponed. Consider a move to hybrid or remote delivery.

Multiple year/Key Stage/whole school assemblies postponed during the outbreak and switched to remote delivery.

All planned offsite visits reviewed and are to include COVID-19 controls, residential visits in-particular may need to be postponed.

Sports fixtures with other schools will be reviewed and potentially postponed.

Reduction in interaction / close contact situations:

Re-introduction of space at the front of the class to enable staff to maintain distance from children.

Layouts and capacities for shared spaces, such as offices, meeting rooms, staff room etc. will be reviewed to limit numbers. Face to face meetings to be restricted to those which are essential. All such meetings will be held in larger spaces with good ventilation. Large meetings/all staff briefings will be re-scheduled or undertaken remotely to reduce contact between staff.

Visitors / parental attendance:

Access to school will be limited. Parents/carers and visitors to attend by appointment only. Wherever possible, meetings will take place via telephone or other virtual methods.

Any additional controls required of visitors in response to an outbreak will be communicated to them.

Hire / lettings:

In the event of an outbreak these will be reviewed and potentially postponed.

Times of hire should ensure any unnecessary mixing with members of the school community is minimised and access is arranged to avoid such contact.

Areas used by hirers to be subject to cleaning before / after use. School equipment should ideally not be used by hirers. If it is, it must be thoroughly cleaned after use – or left in 'quarantine' for 72 hours before being used by the school/other users.

Re-introduction of bubbles:

Either in terms of Key Stages, year groups; or classes dependent upon context. Groups to remain clear and consistent and separated from other groups.

Limiting interaction between groups by:

- Staggering breaks;
- Further staggering lunch or reintroducing a temporary pop up dining room;
- Minimise rooms / spaces being shared across groups;
- Cleaning shared spaces between use by different groups e.g. canteen, school library etc. No groups are coming together for assemblies, events / school fairs, school trips etc.

The reintroduction of bubbles for a temporary period may be required to reduce mixing between groups. In line with the DfE guidance, 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. Should a move to bubbles be made then enhanced cleaning and/or quarantining of shared equipment would be required alongside the introduction of bubbles.

Home testing:

Continue to provide LFD testing kits to staff and encourage 2 x weekly testing.

Increased use of home testing for staff may be required.

In addition, we will also seek advice from the Local Public Health Team and/or DfE if a pupil, student, child or staff member is admitted to hospital with COVID-19. Hospitalisation could indicate increased severity of illness or a new variant of concern. We will then be offered public health support in managing risk assessments and communicating with staff and parents.

Stage 3 – Confirmed outbreak

Restrictions on attendance:

Restrictions on attendance would only be considered in extreme circumstances and as a last resort. Additional measures would be implemented based on advice from the Local Authority, Director of Public Health (DsPH), Public Health England or Central Government.

If advised to limit attendance due to COVID cases the school's remote learning plans will be reintroduced.

In such circumstances, we may be advised by LPH/DfE to implement attendance restrictions as an exceptional short-term measure and a last resort:

- Across an area, on government advice to suppress or manage a dangerous variant and to prevent unsustainable pressure on the NHS.
- For individual settings, on public health advice in extreme cases where other recommended measures have not broken chains of in-setting transmission

In all circumstances, the priority will continue to be given to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers to attend to their normal timetables.

Where measures include attendance restrictions, we may be advised by the DfE on any other groups that should be prioritised.

Where we are advised, temporarily, to limit attendance, we will ensure that high-quality remote education is provided to all pupils not attending.

Prioritising certain year groups:

DfE has stated in their contingency framework that Early Years and primary settings should be prioritised to continue to operate as normal. The DfE may advise that other groups should be prioritised.

If some attendance restrictions are needed, all vulnerable children, children of critical workers, children in reception, year 1 and year 2 should still be allowed to attend. If, by exception, attendance is restricted further, vulnerable children and children of critical workers should still be allowed to attend.

If attendance needs to be restricted further then in all circumstances, priority should continue to be given to vulnerable children and young people and children of critical workers to attend to their normal timetables.

If attendance restrictions are required across an area the Government will publish detailed operational guidance for schools.

Should restrictions on site be needed the school will determine the workforce required on site and if it is appropriate for some staff to work remotely.

School meals:

The school will continue to provide meal options for all pupils in school. Free school meals support in the form of meals, lunch parcels or vouchers will be provided for those eligible for free school meals and not attending school.